

50th Anniversary

Colts Neck Volunteer Fire Co. No. 1

1927-1977

DEDICATION

Dedicated to all the volunteers, men and women, who had served Colts Neck Fire Co. No. 1 during its first fifty years.

This booklet, commemorating fifty years of volunteer service to Colts Neck Fire Co. No. 1, was compiled as a labor of love by Dorothy Decher Gunther, with the gracious assistance of her husband Harold, and their daughter, Barbara Gunther Reed. Apologies are extended if, in the sorting of memorabilia available to them, and the assembling of material, omissions of information were made.

COLTS NECK FIRE CO. NO. 1

OFFICERS

(in 1977)

Robert Baggitt	President
Joseph Wilson	Vice President
Les Freeman	Treasurer
Irvine Dowd	Secretary
Robert Frantz	Assistant Secretary/Treasurer
Richard McCoy	Steward
William Kozabo	Trustee
George Illmensee, Jr.	Trustee
Joseph Wilson	Trustee
Ben Arnella	Department Chief
Richard McCoy	Deputy Chief
Charles Buck	Captain
David Barclay	1st Lieutenant
William Kelleher	2nd Lieutenant
James Reed	Chief Engineer

FIRE AUXILIARY

Barbara Gunther Reed	President
Joanne Hiller	Vice President
Marie Veselis	Treasurer
Linda Schanck	Secretary
Lorraine Kelleher	Corresponding Secretary

COLTS NECK'S FIRE DEPARTMENT CHIEFS

Conrad H. Decher	~1927-1929
James Higgins *	1930-1931
William Norman *	1932
Arthur Soffel	1933
Martin Riley *	1934
Karl Soffel	1935-1936
Martin Riley	1937-1938
Harold Gunther, Sr	1939-1940
Edwin Sherman	1941
John Riley	~1942-1944
William Pillis	1945-1947
Charles Crine	1948-1949
William Pillis	1950
George Decher	1951
John Koster	1952-1953
Garrett Thompson	1954-1955
William Miles	1956-1957
Howard Quabeck	1958-1959
Granville LeMeune	1960-1961
Stanley Herbert	1962
Jesse Boyle	1963
Granville LeMeune	1964-1965
Joseph Wilson	1966
George Downes, Co. No. 2	1967
William Murray	1968
Joseph Lockwood, Co. No.2,	1969
William Pillis	1970
George Downes, Co. No.2	1971
Robert Baggitt	1972
David Lott	1973
Richard McCoy	1974
David Lott	1975

Richard McCoy	1976
Benjamin Arnella	1977

***Deceased (as of 1977)**

PAST PRESIDENTS

Louis Snyder	1927-1928
Chriney Conover	1929
Garrett W. Buck	1930-1931-1932
Clarence Willett	1933
Frank Magee	1934-1935-1936
Joseph Crine	1937-1938
Jacquin Lawrence	1939
David Timidaiski	1940
Warren Snedeker	1941-1942-1943-1944
Arnold Conover	1945-1946
George Illmensee Sr	1947
William Buck	1948-1949
Charles Crine	1950-1951
George Capra	1952-1953-1954-1955
William Miles	1956-1957
Howard Quabeck	1958-1959
Granville LeMeune	1960-1961
Stanley Herbert	1962-1963-1964
Thomas Smith	1965-1966
Howard Quabeck	1967-1968
William Kozabo	1969-1970
Joseph Wilson	1971-1972
George Illmensee, Jr.	1973-1974-1975
Robert Baggitt	1976-1977

TWENTY YEAR MEN & OVER (as of 1977)

Arnold Conover	December 6, 1932
Harold Gunther, Sr	October 1, 1933
Charles Crine	December, 1934
William Pillis	November, 1940
Fred Blanchard	March, 1941
John Bajcar	September 1942
George Decher	January, 1943
William Miles	January, 1943
Earl Reed	January, 1943

Garrett Thompson	June, 1943
Zeno Kanetsky	November, 1947
Adam Lukoic	June, 1949
Howard Quabeck	August, 1950
Granville LeMeune	November, 1952
Stanley Herbert	October, 1954

IN MEMORIAM

It is with reverence that we pause and pay tribute to the Loving Memory of our Comrades who have passed on, and it is in true spirit that we inscribe their names, and mourn their cherished Memories.

DECEASED MEMBERS (as of 1977)

James Higgins	1931
Conrad Decher	1933
Michael Welsh	1934
Garrett Buck	1935
Michael Borduick	1937
Louis Snyder	1943
Martin Riley	1944
James Van Mater	1944
Edward Hebler	1950
Chriney Conover	1951
John Laird	1955
David Timidaiki	1956
William Desmond	1957
Alfred Buck	1958
Walter Fields	1958
Herman Holling	1958
George Hoey	1959
Robert Martin	1961
Llewellen Hiller	1962
John Sutphin	1962
William Hardy	1963
George Capra	1964
Warren Snedeker	1964
William Van Note	1964
Joseph Crine	1966
Walter Durczak	1968
Norman Sickles	1968
Edward Hoey	1972

Fred Perrotti	1974
John Riley	~1975
Lawrence Marquardt	1975
Daniel Riordan	1976

AUXILIARY MEMBERS

Mae Riordan	1953
Veronica Illmensee	1949
Catherine Dressler	1964
Hazel Hiller	1965

COLTS NECK FIRE CO. NO. 1

WET DOWN & 50th ANNIVERSARY

Saturday, September 24, 1977

1977 Young 1,000 Gallon Pumper	Captain Charles Buck	1,000 Gallon Capacity
1971 GMC 750 Gallon Pumper	Captain Dick McCoy	1,000 Gallon Capacity
1963 Mack Truck 1,000 Gallon Pumper	Captain John Bajcar	1,000 Gallon Capacity
1955 Ford Pumper 750 Gallon Pumper	Chief Garrett Thompson	1,000 Gallon Capacity
1951 Chevrolet 600 Gallon Tanker	Chief George Decher	
1939 Ahren Fox 500 Gallon Pumper	Chief Harold Gunther	300 Gallon Capacity 1000' Hose
1927 GMC 2 Ton Pumper	Chief Conrad Decher	440 Gallon Chemical Hand Extinguishers

PROGRAM

Invocation Rev. Samuel LaPenta

Dinner

Welcome Joe Wilson, Chairman

Introduction of Committee Joe Wilson, Chairman

George Illmensee, Jr.

William Kelleher

Arnold Conover

Garrett Thompson

Harold Gunther

Dorothy Decher Gunther

Peeling Of The Bell For Deceased Brothers & Sisters Chaplain

Introduction of M.C. Joe Wilson

M.C. Frank Porter

Introduction of Present Officers

Presentations

Then and Now - 1927-1977

Music and Dancing Bob Gianettino's Band for your pleasure. . .

HISTORY OF THE COLTS NECK FIRE CO. NO. 1

50th ANNIVERSARY

1927 - 1977

In November of 1926, a small group of men from Colts Neck (then Atlantic Township) met at the home of Conrad Decher for the purpose of discussing the possibility of starting a Fire Company for Atlantic Township, rather than depend upon the Freehold Fire Co., whose services had always been required for protection.

Those attending were:

Conrad Decher, Lewis Snyder, George Decher, Frank Hyatt, Jacquen A. Lawrence, Michael Welsh

They decided to hold a meeting at the Town Hall on December 8, 1926, and contact all the men of the Township to find out who would be interested in forming such a company.

The idea was met favorably and the Colts Neck Fire Co. No. 1 was formed. Mr. J. A. Lawrence acted as temporary chairman at this meeting for the selection of the officers who were to guide the destiny of the newly founded organization.

Mr. Lewis V. Snyder was elected President, Mr. Lawrence became Vice President, while Frank Hyatt was given the job of Recording Secretary. George Hance was elected as Treasurer with Walter Fields serving as Financial Secretary. Messrs. Patrick McCue, James Higgins, Richard Clayder were elected Trustees. Chriney Conover was elected Chief, but declined in favor of Conrad Decher, and Mr. Conover became First Assistant with Winsor Heulitt as Second Assistant Chief. George Hoey was elected Sergeant-at-Arms. There were 33 Charter Members.

On December 14th, another meeting was called and a discussion was held on the possibility of soliciting funds to help the company get started. A favorable vote was made and George Decher started the drive by donating \$10.00 plus \$ 1.00, as it apparently had been decided that all who donated an additional \$ 1.00 became honorary members. (\$1088.50).

At the meeting held on January 4, it was decided to hold regular meetings the first and third Tuesday of each month at the Town Hall. Dues were 25 cents per month, and members agreed that upon voting in new members, three black balls would reject the applicant.

To raise funds for a firehouse, a dance was held at the School and \$135.00 was realized. Thereafter, a dance was held once a month for a number of years and was extremely popular.

At the January 18th meeting, it was voted to change the name of the company to Atlantic Township Fire Co. No. 1. The By-Laws were adopted on February 1, 1927 and on February 15, 1927 the Certificate of Incorporation was received and signed.

At this same meeting, it was voted on to purchase the blacksmith shop and red barn for \$2,800.00 from Parker Culver and his wife Elizabeth. This was used for a firehouse for 26 years and is now the Colts Neck Honey Shop, Route 537.

The following month found the company asking the Township Committee to purchase our first piece of fire apparatus, which was a GMC 2 ton truck with Buffalo-Childs Equipment plus 440 gallon chemical tank which was delivered June

20, 1927. The company immediately started drills to acquaint the men with the use of the chemical tanks. A large bell was installed outside the firehouse to be rung in case of fire, as electricity has not come through Colts Neck as yet.

At the November meeting it was voted on to purchase a Sterling three-phase siren for \$340.00, as electricity was now through town. The switch was installed in Chief Decher's house. At this meeting it was also decided to purchase seven brown Globe coats and one white one for the chief at a cost of \$9.50 each.

In January of 1928 a Ladies Auxiliary was started but this organization only lasted two years.

Interesting to note that at the February 7, 1928 meeting, a motion was passed that any fireman drunk at a fire company dance be fined or expelled from the Company.

At their April, 1928 meeting a motion passed to purchase six brooms for fighting grass and brush fires.

During the month of May an amusing incident occurred. The Board of Education sold the bell at the schoolhouse to Mayor Snedeker of Atlantic Highlands. However, he mistakenly took the fire bell from in front of the firehouse. So, two members were appointed to get the bell. However, Mayor Snedeker refused to relinquish the bell. After months of discussion and legal advice, the bell was returned in exchange for the school bell.

In August, 1928, the first 32' ladder was purchased.

In December, 1928, the first of many New Year's Eve parties was held for the firemen and their wives. During the coming year many regularly scheduled socials were held for the firemen and their families.

At the February 1929 meeting, the firemen voted to burn off dry fields that were a tire hazard, for township residents.

At the March 5, 1929 meeting a motion was passed to have a well dug at a cost of 53.00 per foot. The pump cost \$112.00. Frank Hyatt made a well top at the cost of \$2.50.

In August, 1929, the Firemen held a beach party for the fire-men and families at Long Branch. It was noted to be a huge success.

In the September, 1929 meeting, a complaint was received that some of the firemen had taken ladies for a joy ride on the fire truck. Much discussion was held

and a motion was made that no ladies were to ride to, or from, a fire on the truck, or go for a "joy ride".

On October 1, 1929, Chief Decher brought before the Company, the fact that the school building did not have a fire escape or exits in case of emergency, as all classes were held upstairs. This was taken up with the Board of Education. However, they stated that the school was approved by the State. It was considered to be a one-story building, therefore did not require fire escapes. (Note: There are now fire escapes on Atlantic Elementary School, but it took forty years before this was done.)

In November, 1929, a motion was made to have one meeting on the first Tuesday of each month.

At the May 6, 1930 meeting it was discovered that the Company's treasury was empty and quite a few bills were due. A motion was made that each man who could, would lend the Fire Company money to pay the bills. According to the minutes this was met with hearty approval. The money was paid back by February, 1931.

By the June, 1930 meeting, the Fire Company had appointed six men as Fire Police. The Company was very active in attending parades in all the surrounding communities.

April, 1931 meeting, it was decided to blow the siren every Saturday at noon.

The first clam bake stag party was held at Matthew's log cabin in May for members only.

In June, 1931, the Navesink Hook & Ladder Company donated a pool table to the company.

A dance date was set for January 8, 1932. Admission charge was still to be fifty cents. Dances again were held once a month.

During the winters of 1932 through 1935, the members held a pool tournament. The winners of each of these tournaments donated the prize money for a company party.

For the next few years the company devoted itself to raising funds through dances, drives, and minstrel shows. These funds were expended for the repairs and maintenance of the building and also for the care and upkeep of the apparatus, and the purchase of coats for the men.



Frank Hyatt, Jacquin Lawrence, Arthur Soffel*, Garrett Buck and Conrad Decher, Chief, are among those pictured with Atlantic Township Fire Co.'s first fire truck, a 1927 GMC. (*Mr. Soffel, who is now 90 years old, resides in Red Bank, NJ).

December 14, 1933, saw the passing of Ex-chief Conrad Decher, a loss felt by many in the community, especially the Fire Co. (Note: For fifty years there has been a continuous membership in both the Fire Co. and the Auxiliary, of members of Conrad's family, to this day. Conrad's wife, Martha (Mom), who is past president of the Auxiliary; daughter, Dorothy Decher Gunther, also past president of the Auxiliary and her husband, Harold Gunther, Sr., ex-chief of the Fire Company; Conrad's son George Decher, also an ex-chief of the Fire Company; granddaughter, Barbara Gunther Reed, the current president of the Ladies Auxiliary, and her husband, James F. Reed, chief engineer of the Fire Company; Harold Gunther, Jr., Fire Company Member, and his wife, Susan Prest Gunther, Auxiliary member. Conrad Decher's two other sons, Kenneth, Fair Haven, and Franklin, Del Ray Beach, Florida, are both honorary members.

There is one other charter member whose family has been continuously active in the Fire Company and Ladies Auxiliary. That is Chriney Conover, whose son Arnold is past president of the Fire Company and his wife, Bertha, an Auxiliary member. Chriney Conover's daughter, Mildred Conover Daniels, is an honorary member of the Auxiliary, her husband LeRoy an honorary member of the Fire Company; his granddaughter, Joan Daniels Page, is currently an Auxiliary member.

In 1934 a basketball team was formed which was active for several years. That same year they sponsored the Boy Scout troop.

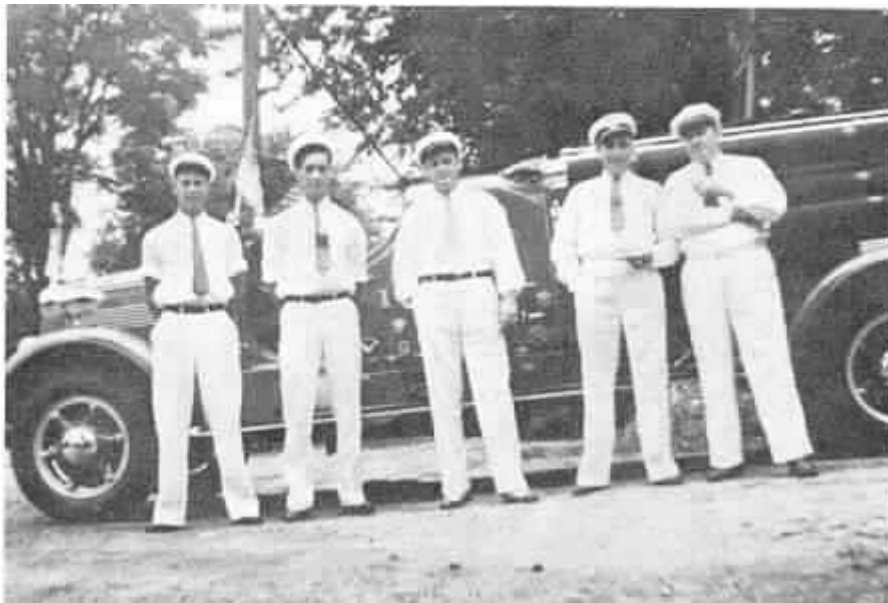
At the January, 1934 meeting a committee went before the Township Committee to have a resolution passed to put the Company under their control so the Fire

Company could become members of the State Relief Association. They became members on January 8, 1935.

In April of 1935 the Company did away with chemicals and had tanks replaced on the GMC Fire truck.

The 10th Anniversary of the Atlantic Township Fire Company was celebrated on October 17, 1936. All those attending had to pay 25 cents.

Let it be noted that the Township Committee rented the building to house the truck for \$60.00.



Pictured left to right Edwin "Pat" Sherman, Harold "Jake" Gunther, John Riley, John Maher, Pop Riley.

In 1938, the Fire Company was again represented in the sporting world. This time by a soft ball team. The team earned a reputation not only for its ability on the baseball diamond, but also for its thirst. This softball team represented the Atlantic Township Fire Company for four years. With the advent of World War II many of the young men were called away to service and the softball team was disbanded. Many members felt that this softball team did much to promote good fellowship toward our neighboring companies.



The 1939 Colts Neck Fire Co. No. 1 Baseball Team. Standing (left to right) Fred Hill, Frank Magee, Harold Gunther, Arnold Conover, Ray Walling. Front Row: (left to right) George Richdale, John Riley, Pat Sherman, Joe Crine and Charles Crine.

At the November 8, 1938 meeting it was voted to write a letter to Mrs. Dorothy Decher Gunther asking her to start an auxiliary, which was formed the latter part of November, 1938.

In June, 1939, the Auxiliary presented the firemen with their first gift: a dart board. In that same year the firemen got together and built a road to the brook on the firehouse grounds. In this way, in the event there was a fire in town, they would have easy access to water.

In February, 1940, a perplexing problem confronted the Fire Company. Mrs. Martha Decher was moving from the house adjoining the firehouse. It would now be necessary to find a new location for the telephone and the fire siren switch. After much discussion, Warren Snedeker, then president of the Fire Company, agreed to take the telephone into his home, even though it was impossible to have a remote control switch to the fire siren.

In September, 1941, it was voted upon to hold a "going-away party" and give a gift to all the men inducted into the armed services. The first fireman to go was Kenneth New.

In accordance with the Civil Defense laws, on December 15, 1941, a First Aid Course was given to all firemen and the Ladies Auxiliary members. On December 19, 1941, the men attended Fire School.

World War II was affecting the consciousness of even this small rural town. Non_firemen were trained starting in January, 1942, to act as reservists and to run fire trucks in case of emergency. They were also to work with the Defense Council on air raid alarms.

On March 2, 1942, the men voted to have an Honor Roll for Servicemen placed in the firehouse. This was donated by the Ladies Auxiliary.



Getting ready for a parade in 1940. The truck is the Ahren Fox. Left to right: Kenneth Decher, Edwin "Pat" Sherman, William Pillis, George Decher, Adam Lukoic, Edward Hebler, Stillman Blanchard, Harold "Jake" Gunther, John Coster.



Atlantic Township Fire Co. No. 1 grouped in front of the Fire House (now Colts Neck Honey Shop on Rt. 537) Seated: (left to right) Frank Demarest, Clarence Willett, Daniel Riordan, Arthur Soffel, Charles Conover, Albert Coon, John Sutphin, Louis Plotkin, Frank Magee, George Richdale, William Hardy. Standing: (left to right) Charles Crine*, Raymond Wading, Fred Hill. Martin "Pop" Riley, Louis Snyder,

Edwin "Pat" Sherman (Assistant Chief), Harold "Jake" Gunther (Chief), John Riley, Joseph Crine, Fred Perrotti, George Illmensee, Sr., Warren Snedeker. Seated in truck: Jack Maher. *20 year member.

It was decided at the April 7, 1942 meeting to have air raid drills on Saturdays at noon when the siren was blown.

In case of emergency, Mr. Carroll Barclay offered the use of his spraying machine.

On May 5, 1942, because of the gas shortage, it was voted on to leave one apparatus in the building for 5 minutes after the alarm, so men did not have to drive their own cars to the fires.

In July, 1942, black-out shades were purchased for the firehouse in accordance with Civil Defense regulations.

The mortgage was paid off in January, 1943, but the Fire Company did not have a "mortgage burning" until March due to the ban on pleasure driving.

On March 2, 1943, after the meeting, the first "Becoming a Father" party was held for Harold Gunther, Sr., whose daughter was born on February 12. This type of celebration was held for births for many years to follow.

During this time the Fire Company sent packages to all Colts Neck servicemen. Letters started coming in from all over and in response the Ladies Auxiliary published a little newsletter called "The Burning Ear," which was sent to all the servicemen of the community. It was edited by Dorothy Gunther and was filled with the whereabouts of local servicemen and hometown news.

In February, 1944, at the annual joint meeting of the Fire Company and Ladies Auxiliary, it was brought up that with so many men in the service and away during the day, that there was a possibility that the ladies would be asked to drive the apparatus. However, this never became necessary. The Fire Company purchased its first War Bonds at this time in the amount of \$150.

In December, 1944, the Fire Company was called to a fire at Laird's Applejack Distillery. When the fire was extinguished, each fireman was presented with a bottle of Laird's Applejack.

In June 1944, it was announced that if the Fire Company was called to a fire at the Navy Depot (Earle), the apparatus must be fully manned before leaving the firehouse as cars could not get into the Depot without a pass.

First discussion was held for building a new firehouse in October, 1944, and plans for a fund raising drive was made with the aid of the Ladies Auxiliary.

In November, 1944, a plaque for deceased firemen was purchased.

A motion was made and passed to purchase the lot next to the Atlantic School for \$500. for the site of the new firehouse.

In September, 1945, the switch for the fire siren was installed at the Colts Neck General Store.

The softball team was started up again in June, 1946.

In September, 1946, the Fire Company decided to have an old-fashioned hayride, and have a party back at the firehouse after the ride. This was a huge success. Those who were there at the time will remember it well.



Charles Crine in front of the Ford Pumper.

In 1947, the membership voted to have a Fireman's Fair, which was held on Gene Kelly's grounds adjoining his tavern on Highway 34 (now known as Green Meadows). George Capra was chairman, and his committee consisted of Arnold Conover, Roy Daniels, Harold Gunther, Charles Crine, David Tirmidaiski, Robert Martin, George Decher and Bill Pillis. The men had to go to New York to get the fair equipment. A Hot Point refrigerator was raffled off.

It was during 1947 that the Atlantic Township Fire Company put on their one and only Minstrel Show. It was such a hilarious suc_ess that there are those residents

who still live in town, that still speak of the great time the Fire Company had putting it on.



Every minstrel must have an "interlocutor". That's Chriney Conover behind the microphone. Front row (left to right): Unknown, Mildred Daniels, Bertha Conover, Norma Cole_Hatchard, Dorothy Gunther, Ida Hunt, Veronica Illmensee. Back row: Marion Conover, blackface boy_ Robert Bergin, "mammy" - Martha "Mom" Decher, other blackface boy- Jack Illmensee, Elizabeth Decker, Marge Conover, unknown, Viva Blanchard.



SOUTHERN MINSTREL AND DANCE was what it was called. Felix Santangelo directed it. The music was by Max Lewis. And it seemed just about everybody in town was in the minstrel which consisted of songs and jokes. The Interlocutor was Chriney "parson" Conover, The "end men" were Leroy "Lightnin" Daniels, Reginald "Sambo" Cole_Hatchard, George "Ham" Capra, William "Rastus" Buck, George

"Peewee" Decher, Leroy "Taps" Hunt. Members of the Chorus: Veronica Illmensee, Harold Gunther, Dorothy Gunther, George Illmensee, Jr., Mrs. Ward W. Degroot, Ward W. Degroot, Norma Cole-Hatchard, Marguerite Forman, Joseph Forman, Martha Decher, Michael Bergin, Robert Bergin, Fred Blanchard, Stillman Blanchard, William Riordan, Edward C. Hebel, Mrs. Fred Blanchard, Earl Reed, William Flock, Joseph Moreau, Jr., Margie Conover, Helen Reynolds, John DeFalco, Charles Buck, Mildred Daniels, Bertha Conover, Louise Richens, Arnold Conover, Ida Hunt, Gladys Hunt, Edna Buck, Jackie Illmensee, Martha Decher, Marion Conover, Martha Woodruff.

In March, 1948, the Fire Company sold the piece of ground next to the Atlantic School back to Robert Martin and purchased instead the piece of property from Dick Clador for their new firehouse.

In June, 1951, the Fire Company purchased a 600 gallon used tanker.

On December 8, 1951, there was a discussion concerning having a celebration for the 25th anniversary of the Atlantic Township Fire Company. It was decided to hold it at the firehouse for firemen and their wives, the Auxiliary and their husbands, and township officials. The cost to the Fire Company was \$135.29.



Happy scenes from the 25th Anniversary Party, December 8, 1951.



Adam Lukoic provided the accordion music for the anniversary party. That's not Humphrey Bogart behind him, but William Miles, former postmaster, unknown, then Howard Quabeck.



Hmm, the food is great!
Left to right: Bill Pillis, Charles Crine and Ed Wiley.

On July 1, 1952, the Ladies Auxiliary presented the Atlantic Township Fire Company with a \$500- check to be used toward the kitchen of the new firehouse.

In September, 1952, the Fire Company held a "pig roast" for the firemen and their families on the grounds of Monmouth Consolidated Water Company. This was an annual affair for several years.

On December 20, 1952, it was announced that the building of the new firehouse was ready to be started.

With the advent of the construction of the firehouse, raising money began in earnest. In March, 1953 the Fire Company held regular baseball pools. They also attempted to sell chances for a car, however, they found out the State would not allow chances to be sold, or bingos or raffles of any kind. They wrote the Governor of New Jersey, but they were turned down and they had to return all the money they received on the chances for the car. The Fire Company then discontinued to have the Fireman's Fair because without the wheels of chance they could make no money.

The new firehouse was ready for occupancy on November 11, 1953. A grand parade of firemen and the Ladies Auxiliary marched from the old firehouse to the new one located on Route 537. A joint meeting of the Atlantic Township Fire Company and the Ladies Auxiliary was the first meeting held there.

In May, 1954 a new siren was purchased for the new firehouse. The Township Committee announced they would pay \$ 100. rent per month to house the fire trucks in the new firehouse.



Garrett Thompson



Granville "Bucky" LeMeune

In 1955, a Ford Pumper fire truck was purchased.

This same year saw the first of the annual horse shows held on the firehouse grounds.

The first Fire Prevention Program was held in the local schools in August, 1962.

In February, 1963, the Township Committee appropriated money for short-wave radios. In March of the same year the name of Atlantic Township Fire Co. No. 1 was changed to Colts Neck Volunteer Fire Co. No. 1. During 1963 there were a number of activities: the horse show, donkey baseball, turkey shoot, the Carnival and fishing trips.

A Department Organization Committee was also formed in 1963, as the Clover Hill section and surrounding area formed Colts Neck Volunteer Fire Co. No. 2.

In 1963 the Fire Company decided to allow the election to be held in the firehouse.

In 1964, as all the Fire Company was enjoying a costume Halloween Party, the fire whistle blew. 34 firemen answered the call to put out a fire at a small night club.



1957 Atlantic Township Fire Co. No. 1 Bowling Team. Left to right: Ed Wiley, Jesse Boyle, Granville "Bucky" LeMeune, Llewellyn Hiller, Earl Reed, Garrett Thompson, William Thacker.

In April, 1967, a raffle was held for a "Trip of Your Choice," within a specified amount. This was most successful.

In May, 1967, the Fire Company had its first chicken bar-b-que. It has since been held annually. Light poles were installed behind the firehouse because the grounds were beginning to be used more and more for various affairs.

In July, 1967, the Fireman's Fairs were re-instituted as wheels and games of chance could again be held.

This same year the Fire Company had their first foam demonstration as a means of putting out fires. They purchased the system in August.

In August, 1967, a new fire company was formed in Freehold Township. The Colts Neck Fire Company donated their unused equipment to help them get started.

On Halloween eve, 1967, the historic structure of Bucks Mill burned to the ground, leaving on the mill wheel as mute evidence. An item in the newspaper was quoted :. "...we have pretty much ruled out juvenile vandalism as the cause of all but one of six suspicious fires including a blaze early Tuesday morning which wrecked Bucks Mill."

In February, 1968, the Fire Company looked into the possibility of having a widows pension, which was \$5,000 per year for Firemen and First Aid Men killed in action.

At this same time it was decided that the fine for not taking care of house duty would be raised from \$4 to \$10.



Ready for Memorial Day parade, 1964. George Decher, seated in firetruck.

At the May, 1968 meeting, the membership voted to march in the Colts Neck Memorial Day Parade rather than the Freehold parade as previously done.

In August, 1968, free x-rays were given to all firemen. Renovation and redecorating of the interior and exterior of the firehouse took place at this time.

During 1968, the D.O. Evans barn burned. Firemen had to use axes and torches to chip ice from the brook to get to the water. This year the Flock barn also burned. William and Dick Flock still had to milk the cows after the fire. The firemen stayed to help get the cows back in stantions.

In September, 1968, the firemen purchased new jackets. Members paid half.

In March, 1969, a new trend was started. Firemen and their wives attended a professional hockey game. George Illmensee, Jr. was in charge of this event, which was most successful. Field Day was held this year and the Colts Neck Fire Company won a trophy. Work was completed on the Pavilion which was built to the rear of the firehouse.

During 1969 the Newbold barn also burned down. The annual Fireman's Fair was in progress at the time. The Newbold's donated free beer on Fireman's Night at the fair as so many outside companies had helped in fighting the blaze.



Colts Neck Volunteer Fire Co. No. 1 Bowling Team: Left to right: George Illmensee, Jr., Robert Baggitt, Earl Reed, Robert LeMay, Granville LeMeune.

In January, 1970, the firemen were presented with a bronze memorial "add-a-name" plaque which hangs in the entrance way of the building.

In 1971 the first Country Festival was held and was successful.

In January, 1972, the Township Code was adopted. There would no longer be outside trash burning. In May, a bill was passed by the N.J. Assembly that flashing blue lights could now be legally installed below the headlights on firemen's cars. This was a big help to the firemen. It was requested that activated signal lights at the Firehouse be installed by the Highway Department.

In June, 1972, it was voted to lower the age to 18 for membership in the Fire Company.

In September, 1972, a contract was signed to start a new addition to the kitchen at the firehouse.

On November 14, 1972 the historic Phalanx building burned down. The Daily Register noted in an article dated Nov. 15, 1972, "...more than 200 volunteer firemen from area fire companies were unable to save the historic Phalanx Building which burned last night. A total of 24 pieces of apparatus were on the scene. Due to a lack of hydrants in Colts Neck, water had to be drawn from surrounding streams. Middletown Fire Co. pumpers drew water from a pond along Richdale Rd. while Colts Neck units drew water from the brook in front of the property along Phalanx. Nearly two miles of hose was laid as pumpers added their power to keep water pressure up. Trucks and lines of hose had to be snaked through surrounding woods in order to enable firemen to get close to the burning structure. The general alarm was sounded approximately 11 p.m. and the fire was

not placed under control until 1:30 a.m. and the general recall was sounded at 3:15 a.m."

It continued, "Colts Neck Fire Chief Robert M. Baggitt and the County Fire Marshall turned up nothing new at their investigation at the site, using a sophisticated "sniffer" device to pick up possible traces of combustibles. Chief Baggitt said the fire was definitely of suspicious origin. George Downes, Colts Neck Deputy Chief, tested a lot of bottles out there, Mr. Baggitt said, but they turned out to be old whisky bottles. Chief Baggitt said proof of arson was difficult to detect. . ."



1973 Colts Neck Volunteer Fire Co. No. 1. Kneeling: James Reed, Robert Aklus, Robert LeMay, Charles Buck, Jr., Joseph Wilson, George Illmensee, Jr., Richard McCoy. Seated: Allan Reed, Stanley Herbert, Zeno Kanetsky, William Pillis, Harold "Jake" Gunther, John Bajcar, Martin Kulecz, Granville "Bucky" LeMeune. First Row Standing: Lawrence Marquardt, Arnold Conover, William Miles, Adam Lukoic, Wilbarn Kelleher, Lester Freeman, Ed Whelan, Richard Hammond, Ray Fazewski, Earl "Pappy" Reed. Back Row Standing: Paul Runge, William Murray, George Curley, Ed Wylie, Eugene Thomson, Gordon Thompson, Stanley Schanck, Joseph Liquori, Robert Baggitt, Thomas Orgo.

In December, 1973, the annual Captain's Dinner was held. As the members were leaving a fire call came for Festoon Farm, a fire which lasted several days.

The next few years saw the Fire Company continue to grow and in 1973 our major addition of a hall was added to the building. Civic and community groups make

active use of this room. To raise funds, the Fire Company has staged the Annual Fair (They are still using the same chance cage built by William Buck and Roy Daniels way back when), chicken-bar-b-que, company_catered dinners, and the annual drive. Another annual event is the Field Day and, of course, the Annual Dinner Dance, when awards are presented to the various members.



Field Day fun... Left to right: Sue Prest Gunther, Barbara Gunther Reed, unknown, Joan Wills, Helen Hubeny.

In 1977 there was a fire at Orgo's Greenhouses. Bill Ielleher fell through a roof while fighting the fire.

And on Saturday, September 24, 1977 the Colts Neck Fire Co. No. 1 hosted a "wet down" to celebrate the acquisition of the 1977 Young 1000 Gallon Pumper, with Captain Charles Buck.

.... which brings us up to the present time in 1977 when we are celebrating our 50th Anniversary.



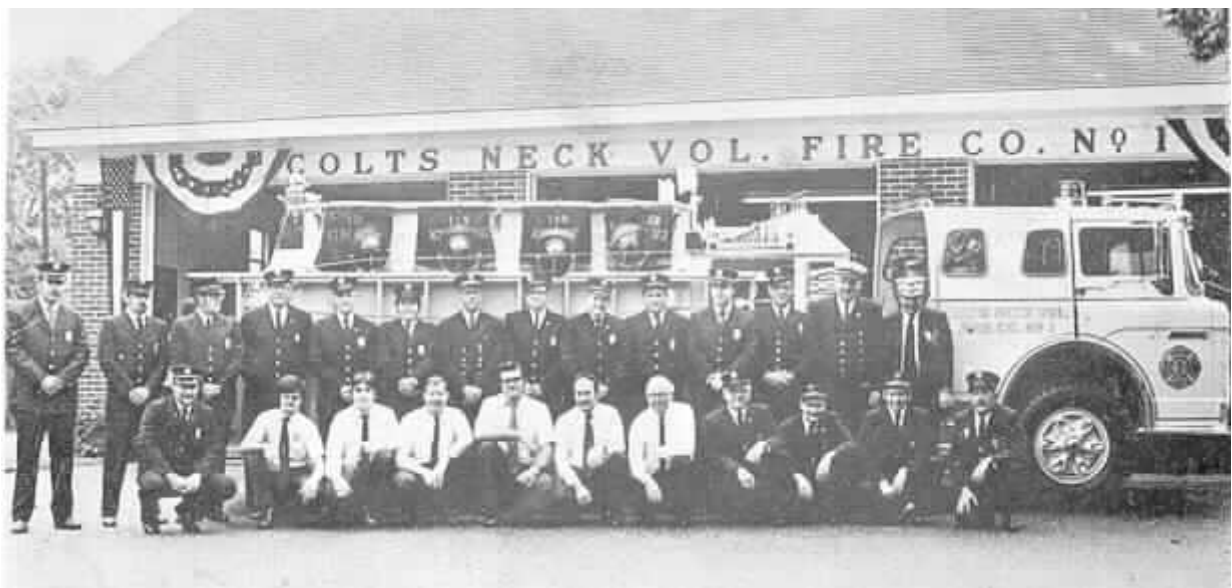
OFFICERS - Colts Neck Volunteer Fire Co. and Dept. Rear: William Kozabo, Richard McCoy Charles Buck, Jr, William Kelleher, Ben Arnella. Front Row: Les Freeman, George Illmensee, Jr., Robert Baggltt, Irvme Dowd, Joseph Wilson



TWENTY YEAR MEN (left to right) Zeno Kanetsky, William Kozabo, John Bajcar, Earl Reed, George Decher, Granville LeMeune, Arnold Conover, Harold Gunther, William Pillis Garrett Thompson. Missing from photo: Adam Lukoic, Howard Quabeck, Stanley Herbert, Photo Credit: David Haynie



Newest piece of equipment, -1000 gallon capacity 1977 Young Pumper.



Colts Neck Volunteer Fire Co. No. 1 - 1977. Standing: Thomas Orgo, James Reed, Robert Baggitt, John Bajcar, Arnold Conover, Merton Sammis, Garrett Thompson, Earl Reed, Granville LeMeune, William Kozabo, William Kelleher, Harold Gunther, William Pillis, Richard McCoy. Kneeling: Charles Buck, Edward Thompson, Robert Loosch, Les Freeman, Stanley Schanck, William Barth, Irvine Dowd, Zeno Kanetsky, George Decher, Joseph Wilson, George Illmensee, Jr. Missing from photo: William Murraroy II, Allan Reed, Charles Archer J. Gordon Thompson, David Barclay, Richard Hammond, Ed Veselis, John Piazza, William Murray 111, George Widger, Robert I rantz, Paul Alrens, Jason Hiller, Lee Wilbert, George Leeuw, Mark Hiller, Robert Brice, David Peterson, William Wilbert, Thomas Brice, Kurt Cerny, Robert

Gianettino. Honorary Members: Charles Cromer, Jerry Cromer, Harold Gunther, Jr., William Thacker, William Cromer, Robert LeMay, Ed Connors
