

BROADSIDE

SPRING 1996

THE VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANIES OF WEST WINDSOR: PART II

PRINCETON JUNCTION VOLUNTEER FIRE CO. NO. 1

(con't from Fall '95)

Current Membership & Future Plans

In 1995, the fire company has about 36 active members and 20 inactive or associate members. Because only five are able to respond to fire calls, the Township has hired two paid fire fighters, working under Emergency Services Director James Yates, who assigns them to work with both fire companies alternately.

The problem of attracting new volunteer fire fighters has become crucial. If volunteers are not forthcoming, the fire company will have to hire fire fighters, which will be paid from West Windsor taxes.

Fire fighting equipment in 1995 consists of: 1973 Pierce Brush Truck; 1973 Hahn Pumper/Rescue truck; 1980 Hahn Pumper; 1986 Pierce Ladder truck with 110 ft ladder. In 1994, a KME Pumper Telesquirt truck with 75 ft. water-shooting boom ladder was acquired. This truck enables the PJ Fire Co. to respond to fires in the taller office buildings on Route One. The WW Fire Co. also has a Telesquirt to assist on such fires and handle taller apartment buildings such as Stewart's Watch.

For the 1990s, the company hopes to build a new, modern fire station in order to serve the community better.

WEST WINDSOR VOLUNTEER FIRE CO. NO. 1

(con't from Fall '95)

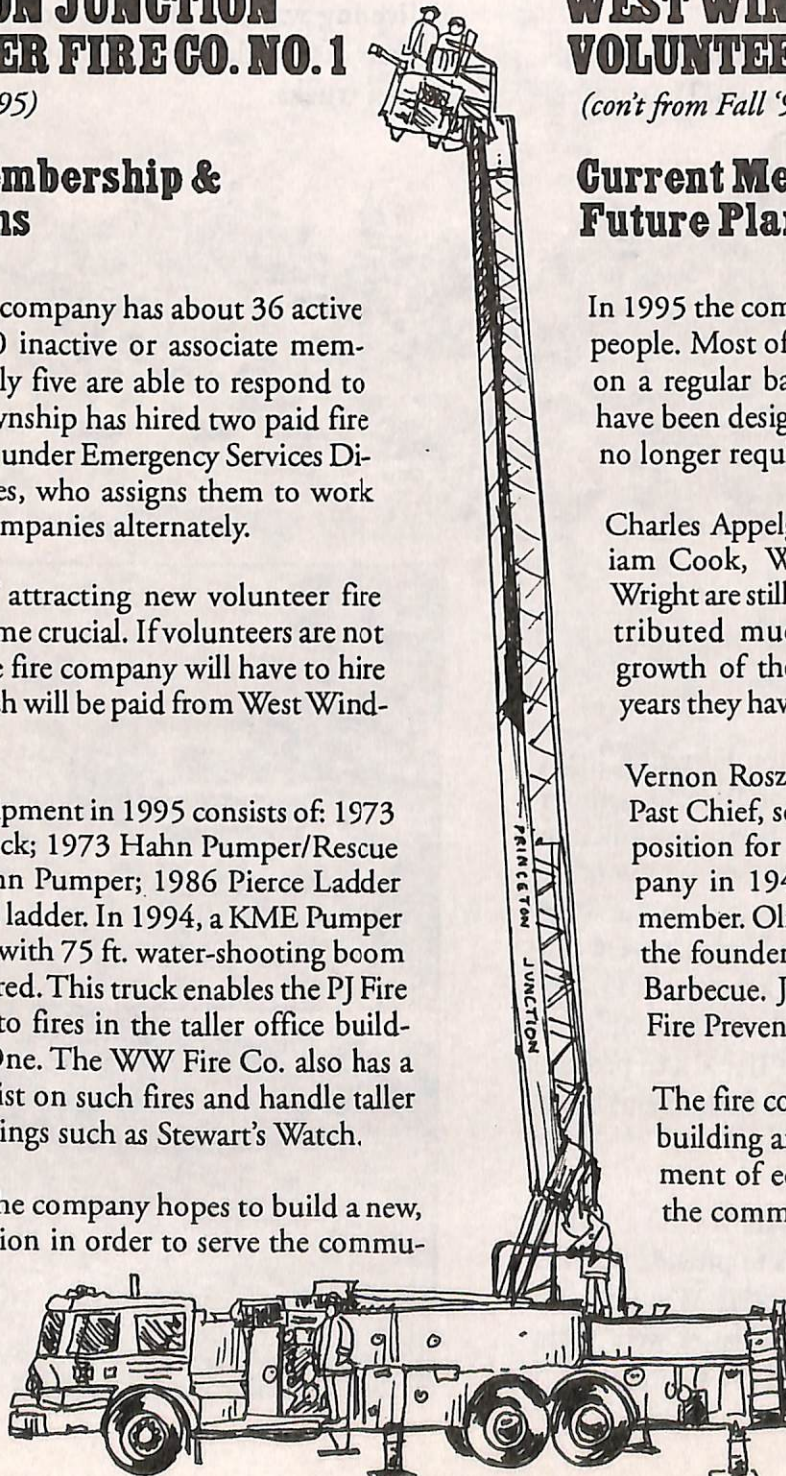
Current Membership & Future Plans

In 1995 the company had a membership of 45 people. Most of the members respond to fires on a regular basis. However, some members have been designated "Life Members" and are no longer required to respond to fires.

Charles Appelget, Raymond Conover, William Cook, Wayne Tindall and David O. Wright are still active members who have contributed much to the construction and growth of the company during the 25-30 years they have each served as active firemen.

Vernon Roszel, who is a Life Member and Past Chief, served our fire company in that position for 20 years. He joined the company in 1941 and is our longest serving member. Oliver Hillpot, still a member, was the founder of our Carnival and Chicken Barbecue. James Greschak developed our Fire Prevention Education program.

The fire company plans expansion of the building and the addition to and replacement of equipment as needed to service the community into the future.



Cooperation Between the Two Fire Companies

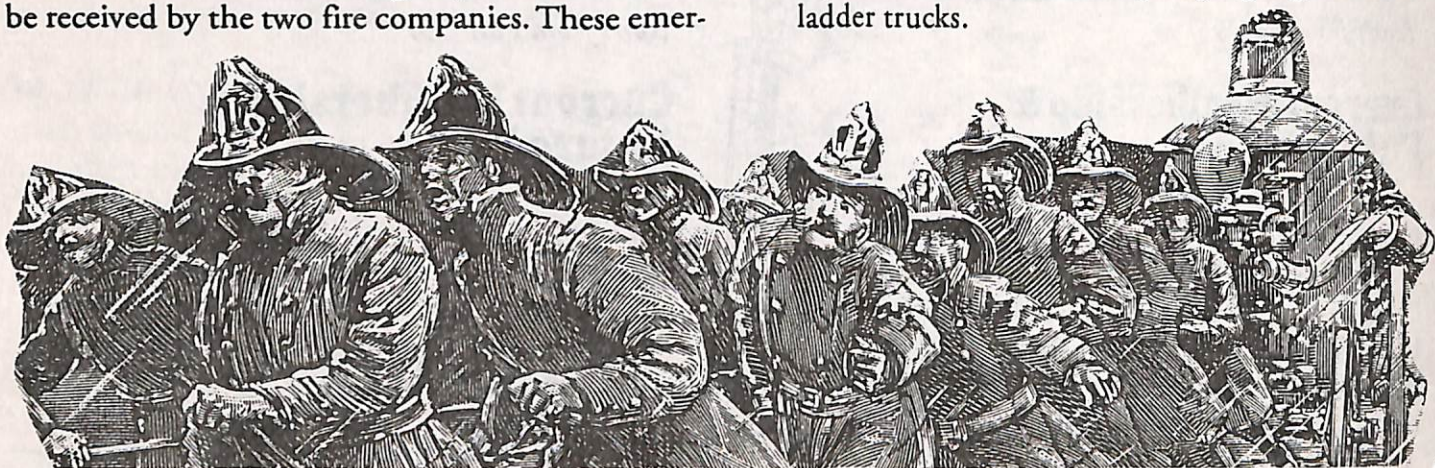
Since their foundings West Windsor's two fire companies have cooperated on all major emergencies. With development that cooperation has become more formalized. West Windsor is divided approximately in half. Each half is the responsibility of one of the two fire companies. However, when a general alarm goes out, both fire companies respond immediately. Additional support is called in after the situation is analyzed.

In 1995 almost 1,000 emergency calls in total will be received by the two fire companies. These emer-

gencies are as often car fires and problems on Route One as they are fire, floods, and flooded basements.

Multi-storied buildings did not appear in West Windsor until the 1980s when the Hyatt Hotel at Carnegie Center was built. Such tall buildings require the addition of fire trucks with taller ladders and hoses that can reach the top of such buildings.

In 1994 West Windsor Township purchased Telesquirt trucks for both fire companies. These trucks have a 75-ft. telescoping boom capable of delivering water at the end, combining the best aspects of traditional water-pumping engines and ladder trucks.

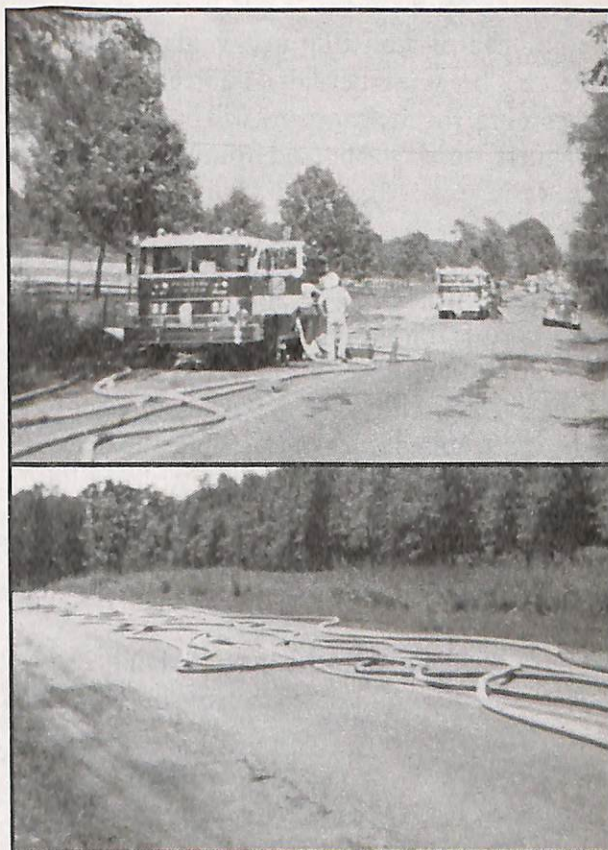


Spectacular Fires and Other Emergencies

"Water Life Line" - 1975

On Labor Day 1975, the Trenton Filtration Plant blew its valve, leaving the city of Trenton without water. Both West Windsor and Princeton Junction fire companies responded, along with many other local fire companies, to form what has come to be known as the "Water Life Line." Hoses were run from the Elizabethtown Water Company at Princeton Pike on the West Windsor-Lawrence border to the plant about 9 miles away in Trenton to provide water to prime the filtration plant pump and bring water to dry Trenton.

In addition, tanker trucks of water were parked at Trenton and Ewing fire stations to provide water if a fire should break out. Both West Windsor and Princeton Junction's Ladies Auxiliaries were there to provide food and support the fire fighters.





Prince "Rec" Center - 1967

One of the most spectacular fires in West Windsor occurred in 1967, when the Prince Theatre and its entertainment complex went up in flames. The complex was located where Pep Boys now sits on Route One. It consisted of a movie theatre, bowling alley, skating rink, cocktail lounge and Chinese restaurant. Only the movie theatre and restaurant survived the blaze.

D&R Canal Gas Pipeline Explosion and Fire

On the afternoon of January 31, 1986, while Canal Pointe was being built, it is believed a bulldozer accidentally ruptured a gasoline pipeline which ran along the Delaware & Raritan Canal. Emergency services from West Windsor, as well as from Princeton, Plainsboro, Lawrence and Hamilton, responded immediately. The oil company was notified and able to shutdown a section of the pipeline from Quaker Bridge Road to Alexander Road.

The gases from the ruptured pipes built up and at 8 p.m. an explosion rocked the area. This is believed to have been caused by the automatic turn on of an electric heater in the Elizabethtown water pump station.

Fortunately, no one was in the vicinity at the time and there were no injuries. The fire burned furiously for a short time, but was quickly contained and burned itself out.

Fire Fighters To The Rescue!

In addition to fighting fires, the fire companies respond to other emergencies, many involving water. Flooded basements are pumped out. Water is brought in to refill heating systems that have lost their water. Motorists are stranded in deep water when excess rainfall covers roads.



Some things never change! But this photo isn't from 1996, it shows flooding on Washington Rd. in 1979.

Automobile accidents involve potentially disastrous explosions and fires. Persons in accidents can be trapped by caved-in steel or require immediate medical attention. Fire fighters are trained in first aid and are often the first on the scene.

In short, when you receive that request for a donation from your local fire company, please remember that the fire fighters are volunteers. They are not paid workers. They are on call 24 hours a day in case something happens to you or your house. Please give generously.

Ladies Auxiliary of Princeton Jct. Volunteer Fire Co. No. 1

On March 9, 1927, the first meeting and election of the Auxiliary took place at the home of Francis Kiernen on Post Road. Thirty-six people were present. This was one month before the fire company received its charter. Discussions were held regarding the purpose of the Auxiliary and plans made for the future. The first official meeting with officers presiding took place April 12, 1927 at the home of William Courtney on Post Road.

The Auxiliary held many fund-raising activities. The first included chicken dinners, cooked in private homes and served in tents across the street from the Alexander Road firehouse. Other fund raising meals included ham, spaghetti and roast beef dinners. Strawberry Festivals, Rummage and Bake Sales, and indoor flea markets were also held from time to time.

When Bingo games were held at the fire house every Friday evening, the Ladies Auxiliary sold refresh-

ments at the event. The facilities of the firehouse were made available for private events and catered dinners.

When the fire fighters are out on major fires, pumping cellars and other water disasters, the Auxiliary is there to provide food, hot drinks and whatever assistance they need.

As mentioned earlier, when the Trenton Filtration Plant needed assistance to provide water to that city, both the West Windsor and Princeton Junction Ladies Auxiliaries, along with the Mercer County Firemen's Ladies Auxiliary and the State Fireman's Ladies Auxiliary, were there providing 450 roast beef dinners for the fire fighters.

The firehouse has been used to house people stranded because of snow storms, floods, etc. The Ladies Auxiliary provided shelter, food and whatever else was needed until the emergency passed.

The Auxiliary disbanded for lack of membership in the late 1980s.



Princeton Jct. Fire Co. Ladies Auxiliary in 1954: (left to right) Mabel Vreeland, Rose Borosko, Ida Smith, Ruth Servis, Helen McKallen, Nora Werner, Lillian Goldman, Betty Ellsworth, Kay Ellsworth, Sara Santowasso, Fanny Tett, Eleanor Pocino, Dora Santawasso, Elsie May Carpenter, Doris Brabson, Vera Reuter, Flora Bathie, Lena Haulenbeck, Alice Caples. Photo courtesy of Ethel M. Mc Ninch. Identification via Lillian Goldman, Ethel M. Mc Ninch, Mary Raybuck, Fran Ruch and Mary Schenck.

The Ladies Auxiliary of WW Volunteer Fire Co. No. 1

In 1945, the Auxiliary was formed. Its purpose: to assist the firemen by raising money to help with the mortgage, to decorate the firehouse, to help purchase uniforms and equipment, to provide food, beverages and whatever during a large fire, emergency or other event requiring the firemen, and to foster a spirit of sociability and friendliness! This latter goal may seem silly and naive to our more sophisticated time, but perhaps it is a goal we should still work toward.



Members of WW Fire Company's Ladies Auxiliary march in a Fireman's Parade. Left to Right: Verna Everett Vandergrift, Mary Schenck, Nanci Tindall, Ruth Greschak. Can you identify the blonde Auxiliary member on the right?

The Auxiliary Charter was signed in December 1945. A group of about twenty women met at the Town Hall in Dutch Neck and elected Myla Tindall (Mrs. Gordon C. Tindall) as its first President. The Charter members were: Emily Bartko, Elsie Burd, Florence Chamberlin, Hazel Everett, Ruth Everett, Grace Hand, Nellie Hann, Doris Holman, Tillie Holman, Ethel Little, Marie MacKenzie, Mary Mathes, Mildred Sailey White, Bertha Schielke, Helen Scott, Dorothy Tindall, Myla Tindall, Evelyn Walton, Annabelle Weeden. In 1995 Charter Members Evelyn Walton and Dorothy Tindall remain active with the Auxiliary.

Through the years the Auxiliary has participated in fund drives for the building of the original firehouse and paying its mortgage. They have paid for some of the interior decorations and uniforms for the fire fighters. The Auxiliary has equipped a kitchen for use in putting on dinners as fund-raisers and to rent

for private events, such as wedding receptions. They have also purchased tables and chairs for the firehouse.

During a fund-raising card party in early post-World War II, chances were sold with nylon stockings, virtually unobtainable at that time, as the prize. These card parties provided another source of income: advertising paid for by local businesses which was printed on the four corners of the card table covers.

In the 1960s and 1970s the Auxiliary went on an annual bus trip to New York City and arranged for special programs for the meetings. Once a year, a pot luck supper and square dance was held. When farmers in the area held auctions, the ladies raised funds by providing refreshments for the bidders.

Other fund raising events in past years included: Fashion Show using clothing from a Hightstown store for which a special model's runway was built in the firehouse.

A Clothing Club was formed using a clothing catalog, which gave the Auxiliary a small profit on each item sold. Clothing purchasers paid between 25 cents to \$1 a week to pay for items they selected. At each monthly meeting, names of purchasers were drawn. The winners received their purchase at whatever amount they had paid up to that week. For example, if someone was in the process of buying a \$10 dress (remember this was in the good ole days) and their name came up after paying installments totalling \$4, they received the dress for \$4.



Members of WW Fire Company's Ladies Auxiliary prepare for the Chicken Barbecue, August 1990. Left to Right: Janice Mount, Betty Hillpot, Dianne Hulburt, Evelyn Novak, Karen Preneta.

Princeton Junction Fire Co. Ladies Auxiliary Presidents:

Mrs. Everett
Mrs. Isabelle Ward
Mrs. Paul Hartman
Mrs. Ellsworth
Mrs. Lena Haulenbeck
Mrs. J. Courtney
Mrs. Webster
Mrs. Vera Reuter
Mrs. Marie Janick
Mrs. Dora Santowasso
Miss Flora Bathie
Mrs. Mary Zemaitis
Miss Fanny Tett
Mrs. Lillian Goldman
Mrs. Theresa Stives
Mrs. Aneta Zinetti
Mrs. Peg Brown
Mrs. Marion Kulthau
Mrs. Shirley La Beur
Mrs. Jaye Clayton
Mrs. Anne Kmenta
Mrs. Louise Canning
Mrs. Lorraine Kapp
Mrs. Gay Kochis
Mrs. Karen Krebs



West Windsor Fire Co. Ladies Auxiliary Presidents:

1945-46 Myla Tindall
1947-48 Marie MacKenzie
1949 Dorothy Tindall
1950-51 Mary Mathis
1952-53 Hazel Everett
1954-55 Mary Schenck
1956-57 Glenna Wilcox
1958-59 Mildred White
1960 Marilyn Stebbins
1961 Lillian Coleman
1962 Mary Alice Rue
1963 Shirlee Bleacher
1964 Gloria Kolpack
1965-66 Verna Vandegift
1967 Kay Holman
1968 Anita Mount
1969 Ruth Greschak
1970 Jean Mellor
1971-72 Phoebe Herman
1973 Jean Pancoast
1974-75 Janet McKnight
1976 Betty Hillpot
1977 Lois Rogers
1978-79 Cindy Oertel
1980-81 Carol Landau
1982 Sue Appelget
1983-84 Mary Schenck
1985-87 Nanci Tindall
1988-92 Mary Schenck
1993-94 Linda McDermot
1995-96 Diane Hulbert

THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR HELP IN WRITING THESE ARTICLES:

*West Windsor Fire Company: Wayne Tindall and Mary Schenck
Princeton Jct. Fire Company: William Manuel, Lorraine Kapp
and James Yates, Emergency Services Director*

Spring Tea & Tour



Tour the Castle and its gardens, and then enjoy a sumptuous tea to benefit the restoration of the Zaitz-Schenck House, our future headquarters. The event will take place Sunday afternoon, May 19, from 1 until 4 p.m., rain or shine.

Those of you attending our Holiday House Tours know about the three floors of antiques and collections on display in the Castle. If you have been too busy at holiday time to attend, now's your chance.

In addition to the collections of copperware, quilts, farm equipment; antique and modern dolls, 5 story

dollhouse; fans, paperweights, and hatpins, we plan to display tea pots, cups, cake plates and tea cloths. Our Victorian costumed mannequins will be having their own tea party in the Music Room.

If the weather is fine, the tea will be set out on the front terrace; if not, inside the house. Several flavors of tea and coffee, as well as iced tea, lemonade, tea sandwiches, cakes and pastries will be available.

All donations will benefit The Historical Society of West Windsor's restoration of the Zaitz-Schenck House on Southfield Road.



\$ MEMBERSHIP DUES \$

*This is the last chance for members to pay 1996 dues without losing the next issue of Broadside. Look at your label. If you are a member and the date next to your name does NOT read 1996, please send Kay Reed your check today.
(If you are over 80, you owe NO DUES.)*

GIFT IDEAS

The Historical Society has several items for sale in connection with West Windsor history:

Tee shirts: \$10 These all cotton, short sleeve tees come in an assortment of colors with a transportation map of old West Windsor on the back and "Historical Society of West Windsor" in an oval on the front. Sizes: Medium, Large and Extra Large. Also toddler size.

Broadside is the publication of the Historical Society of West Windsor. Design and layout by Christiana Parry.

 **Historical Society
of West Windsor**

P.O. Box 38
Princeton Jct., NJ 08550

Notecards: 50¢ - Black and white line drawings of the old train station; former Town Hall in Dutch Neck; former Chapel/Library in Dutch Neck; as well as Grover's Mill are available printed on heavy stock with envelope.

West Windsor Village History: \$12 - Eight Broad-sides containing the histories of Dutch Neck, Penns Neck, Grover's Mill, Edinburg, Princeton Jct. (Berrien City), and Port Mercer are available in a binder. Good way to learn the history of West Windsor quickly.

Complete set of Broadside in a looseleaf binder: \$25 - With this issue we have produced 23 issues of our newsletter. Each issue contains articles on West Windsor history. Notebook includes all the West Windsor Village histories listed above.

Phone Joan Parry at 452-8598 for further information on these items. They will be available at our Spring Tea & Tour and at the Holiday House Tour in December.

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