

Roanoke Island 1975 Ford/American LaFrance

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[Found for sale on eBay](#), here's a 35mm slide scan of a 1975 Ford/American LaFrance, 1000/750 that served Roanoke Island Fire Department. Dig those dual beacons mounted on the edge of the cab. Photographer credit is not known. Click to enlarge the photo that appears in the eBay listing:



What a treat! I used to be a member of RIVFD, and remember that truck from when I was a little kid. The dept still has the two lights (which are very early Whelen strobes with 58w speakers..yes they are strobes not incandescent!). Two trucks later is a 2004 Pierce Enforcer <http://www.rivfd.com/images/apparatus/17..>

Since we are surrounded by water and most of the island doesn't have hydrants or county water, we also have this interesting truck: <http://www.rivfd.com/images/apparatus/17..>

Yes, that's a huge reel on the back of the truck. it holds 2000 feet of 5" and is hydraulically powered. It's used primarily for overboard draft from static water sources. 1500GPM pump.

Jason ([Web Site](#)) - 11/22/10 - 23:38

Thanks for the memories and modern-day updates, Jason. I see you have found our older threads as well! What can you tell us about the Wanchese FD, which merged with the Manteo FD in 1974 to form Roanoke Island FD? There's no historical corporate information from the state's web site, nor have I found other dates or such anywhere.

Legeros - 11/23/10 - 05:46

Not to change the subject but I just read the best book about firefighting in a long time, anybody see the fliers at the station?

Capitol City Fireman - 11/23/10 - 09:09

I've always popped in here and there over the years (I'm the guy who runs the Siren Board). I love the historical stuff you have on here!

As far as the Wanchese FD, it was formed in 1954. Prior to that, fire protection came from Manteo FD at the other end of the island. One of their first trucks was similar to the reel truck I posted above. Since it's a small fishing village, they took an old wooden spool that was used for fishing net (similar to big cable spools the power companies use to transport wire) and attached a motor for deploying LDH. The truck pictured above was purchased right after the two depts merged. Years ago, you would call the number to "Mrs. Joyce" who lives across the street from

the station. When the call was taken, she would walk across the street, unlock the door, trigger the siren manually (Federal model 3), open the bay doors, and write the call and location on a chalkboard for the arriving firemen. To this day, although a very old lady, she still looks out for the firefighters at the south (Wanchese) station. She has a pager she keeps by her bed, and when fire calls are received at night, she hits the garage door remote which opens up the bay doors for the firemen so they don't waste time fumbling for keys. Even though we have pagers, that same chalkboard is still used to write down the call address by the first arriving firefighter. That's about all I know. There really isn't much I could find out about the old Wanchese FD. I spent some time looking over old photos and archives in the department and digging around the old Wanchese station and didnt turn up too much. I'll have to ask some of the older members for additional information.

A new station is currently being constructed next door (it won't fit the quint they are wanting to replace the reel truck with when we get central water soon). The current station will be demolished in a month or two.

Jason - 11/23/10 - 17:23

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preferred)

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