

Fallen Fire Chiefs

02/12/11 523 W - + 8 - 2

This week's funeral for Wilson's Mills Fire Chief Ricky Barbour, who died on February 4, has me thinking about other Chiefs of Department who have died in the line of duty in North Carolina. Here's a list of fallen Fire Chiefs from my data. Additions and corrections are welcome. The fatalities date to 1914, when Charlotte Fire Chief J. Harvey Wallace died along with Captain W. B. Glenn at a barn fire. One department has lost three Fire Chiefs in the line of duty, the Winston-Salem Fire Department.

- **Arnold B Bullard**, 55. Chief of the Winston-Salem FD. Died on July 6, 1980, of a heart attack after collapsing at the Public Safety Training Center.
- **George Crocker**, 32. Chief of the Pine Level FD (Johnston). Died on August 22, 2008, of a heart attack at home, and after responding to a fire and three EMS incidents.
- **Jimmy Lee Davis Sr.**, 63. Chief of the White Oak FD (Onslow). Died on December 10, 2009, of a heart attack, after suffering a medical emergency while preparing to leave his residence to respond to a motor vehicle accident.
- **Edward Earl Gutherie**, 61. Chief of the Morehead City FD. Died on October 15, 1978, of a heart attack on his way to a fire call.
- **Norman J Harrison**, 43. Chief of the East Rockingham FD (Richmond). Died on August 12, 1978, of a heart attack while directing operations at a fire in East Rockingham.
- **William G Hobson**, 57. Chief of the Winston-Salem FD. Died on September 15, 1938, of a heart attack while on duty at Station 2 on South Liberty Street.
- **Ferrell D Hood**, 31. Chief of the Westarea FD (Cumberland). Died on November 15, 1986, of electrocution when a power line fell at a car accident.
- **Michael D Hoover**, 36. Chief of the Tabernacle FD (Randolph). Died on October 14, 1992, in an automobile automobile.
- **Hubert Sidney Jones**, 29. Chief of the Thoroughfare FD (Wayne). Died on November 6, 1998, of carbon dioxide poisoning and smoke inhalation after becoming trapped at a fire in an automobile salvage yard storage building.
- **Lawrence L Kerley**, 36. Chief of the Waynesville FD. Died on August 21, 1942, of injuries sustained in bulk fuel storage explosion and fire on July 14, 1942.
- **George L Magness**, 44. Chief of the Shelby FD. Died on May 25, 1979, and one of four firefighters killed at an explosion and building collapse in the 100 block of West Warren Street.
- **William Lloyd Neely**, 52. Chief of the Statesville FD. Died on November 15, 1936, after collapsing while directing operations at a dwelling fire.
- **Harry E Nissen**, 59. Chief of the Winston-Salem FD. Died on November 28, 1932, after his chief's car was struck by a Greyhound bus, while responding to a fire.
- **Jacob "Jake" Cogdil Parris Jr.**, 62. Chief of the Balsam-Willetts-Ochre Hill FD (Jackson). Died on February 4, 1994, of a heart attack while responding to a rescue call.
- **Charles Schnibben**. Chief of the Wilmington FD. Died on June 16, 1933, after his chief's car overturned while responding to a fire.
- **J Harvey Wallace**, 40. Chief of the Charlotte FD. Died on July 1, 1914, and along with Captain W. B. Glenn while fighting a barn fire, when dynamite exploded in a nearby house.
- **Johnnie Bell Wiseman**, 52. Chief of the Fall Creek FD (Avery). Died on June 26, 1965, when struck by a car while directing traffic at a vehicle accident

Stacy Britt, 38, Chief of Warsaw FD (Duplin) Died January 31st 1949, of injuries sustained from a fire truck vs vehicle incident on the way to a mutual aid structure fire.

car3550 - 02/12/11 - 22:45

Thanks Car3550. I did not have Stacy Britt's rank. Full name Stacy Herring Britt. Occupation was filling station operator. Correct death date is Dec. 31, 1949. Died instantly in a collision on Magnolia Highway in the community of Magnolia. Buried on January 1, 1950 in Pinecrest Cemetery in Warsaw. Source is death certificate.

Legeros - 02/13/11 - 00:03

Mike, wasn't a chief for Antioch (Johnston County) on this list, as well? Seems like one of their chiefs was operating a pumper at a house fire when he died. Or maybe he was not a chief at the time.

DJ - 02/13/11 - 16:19

DJ, Antioch FD member McDaniel Narron, 56, died on August 3, 1976, of a heart attack while operating a pump at a fire at his residence. I do not have his rank in my data, though Google searching finds him described as a charter member of the department.

Legeros - 02/13/11 - 19:13

OK...I am not sure. It seems that years and years ago I read something in the Smithfield Herald about a fire chief that died at a house fire. For whatever reason I thought it was Meadow, but my memories from the 70s are a little cloudy....

DJ - 02/13/11 - 21:28

Name: (real name
preferred)
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To prevent spam we require you to answer this silly question

What are the FIRST TWO LETTERS of the word 'fire'?

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Hide email: Yes, hide my email address.

Small print: All html tags except and <i> will be removed from your comment. You can make links by just typing the url or mail-address.