

UPDATED - Butner Public Safety / Camp Butner Fire Department

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June 2015

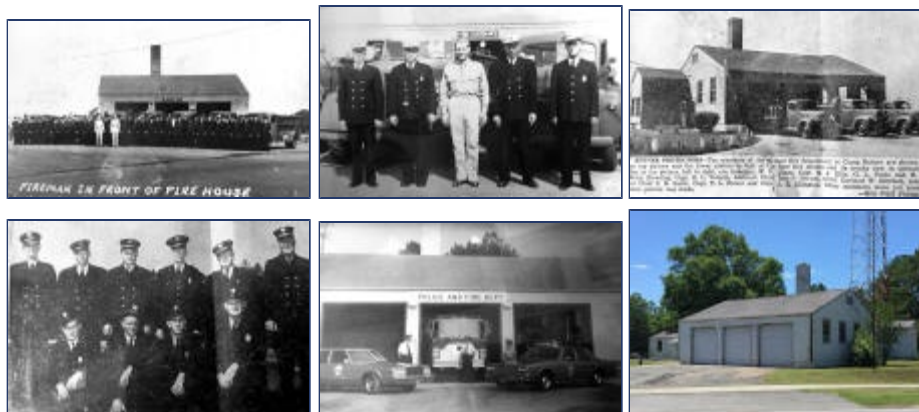
More historical perspective, from photographs displayed at the Butner Public Safety building along with a *Durham Sun* story from September 30, 1947. And which is located across the street from one of the original Camp Butner fire stations, which is still standing.

Headline was *Fire Department at Butner to be Taken Over by State*. With the formal acquisition of the property by the state, noted the story, the fire department would become part of the "State operations." They had twenty-two "experienced firemen" and three "well-equipped" trucks.

The Fire Chief was Garland W. Mitchell. They protected approximate 3,500 buildings on the military reservation along with several hundred patients in the state hospital, residents of Piedmont Village, and the "employed staff of the camp." The fire department provided "twenty-four hour service" and a "constant patrol of the area" was made "in the plan of fire protection."

Since the creation of the department five years earlier, the fire loss has been less than \$8,000. CBFDF was created with two men and a pickup truck "armed with fire extinguishers." This during the construction period and before water lines and fire hydrants were installed. At its peak, CBFDF had eight stations, twelve pieces of equipment, and eight-six men.

With the end of World War II, the fire department "gradually decreased" in size and its fire station buildings were abandoned as "trucks and other equipment" were "shipped away by the government." Click to enlarge:





May 2009
 Found via Google, in something called North Carolina Manual I, 1991-1992, is a little bit of background on the Butner Public Safety Division. It's roots are traced to the Camp Butner Fire Department, created in 1942 when Camp Butner was established. In 1947, the camp was purchased for \$1 as the site for a new state mental health facility. CBFDF became part of the John Umstead I Hospital in the state's Department of Human Resources¹. The staff numbered 18 men, presumably firefighters. As both the Butner complex and the unincorporated community grew, the staff was trained as both firefighters and police officers. The department became known as the Butner Public Safety Department. It was transferred to the state Department of Crime Control and Public Safety in 1981, and its name changed to the Butner Public Safety Division.

BPSD provides police and fire protection for the state hospitals in Butner, and other state facilities, including the 4,600-acre National Guard training range, the federal prison, and the residential, business, and industrial community of Butner. On January 29, 1985, a new 15,000 square-foot public safety center was dedicated. At the time of writing, BSPD had a total force of 44. They were led by a Public Safety Director, a Chief of Fire Services, and a Chief of Police Services. Four platoons were commanded by captains, with master fire officers and master police officers as support staff. Today, as their web site says, they have a Chief, 49 sworn officers, five telecommunicators, and an office assistant.

¹Wonder what they were called? Butner Fire Department? Umstead Hospital Fire Department? Answer as found in June 2015... Butner Fire Department.



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