

Catawba County Firemen's Association



Winter 1983-84 Edition

HISTORY OF BANDYS FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fifty-one interested people of the Bandys Crossroads Community met in the Bandys High School Thursday night, February 8, 1962 and voted to make efforts toward organizing a rural fire department. Mr. W.L. Guy, principal of Bandys High School, conducted the meeting and had reports from County Commissioners of Catawba County favoring the organization. Various other people expressed their hopes for such development.

Carolina Glove of Newton was represented by Mr. Abernathy, Mayor of Newton. He donated land for a building site on the present Carolina Glove Mill property at Bandys Crossroads. The group voted to accept this offer.

A steering committee was appointed to work on plans for the development of this organization. The committee consisted of: W.S. Moore — Chairman, Ray Mackie — Business Manager, Fred Lytton — Secretary, C.W. Pope, E.B. Drum, Bobby C. Korn, G.C. Lee, Fred L. Alley, Joe Johnson, Paul Mackie and Bernard Caldwell.

On March 1, 1962, members met and voted to call the department Bandys Crossroads Volunteer Fire Department, Incorporated.

A mass meeting was held on March 23, 1962, at which time W.S. Moore showed slides of other fire departments. He also discussed details relative to organizing a department. After a unanimous vote to organize the department directors were elected. The directors elected were as follows: Bobby Korn, Harley Sites, Collins C. Jones, Bobby M. Rudisill, Craig Drum, Ned Rowe, Phillip Sherrill, C.W. Pope, Leonard Wright, Recil Laney, Howard Burris, Roy Story, and Bernard Caldwell.

The first chief was G.C. Lee. His assistant was Paul Mackie. January 28 1963, the first truck was purchased from International Harvester Company at a cost of \$3,302.20. Baker Equipment installed the necessary equipment for \$8,059.00.

An old gasoline tanker was purchased and converted into a 1,100 gallon water tanker. This was their first tanker. In 1966 a second pumper was purchased, it was an American LaFrance. Also, a civil defense ¾ ton weapon carrier was converted into a brush truck.

In 1969 a new tanker was purchased and the first one that was bought was donated to Sherrills Ford-Terrill Volunteer Fire Department.

In 1974 another new pumper was purchased and the first pumper was sold to New Salem Fire Department, New Salem, N.C.

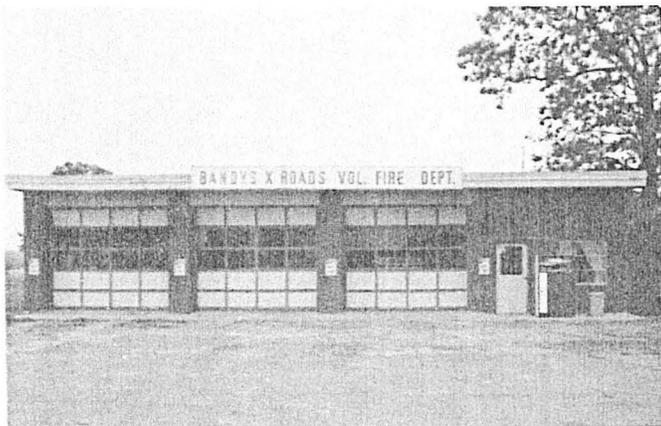
On Tuesday, March 8, 1977, about 80 residents of the Oliver's Crossroads section of Catawba County met at St. Paul's United Methodist Church and decided to start a satellite fire department which would be called Bandys Fire Department Number Two.

- Howard Burris donated the land for this department. A 1973 International truck was converted into a pumper-tanker for the second station. A civil defense weapons carrier was also converted into a brush truck.

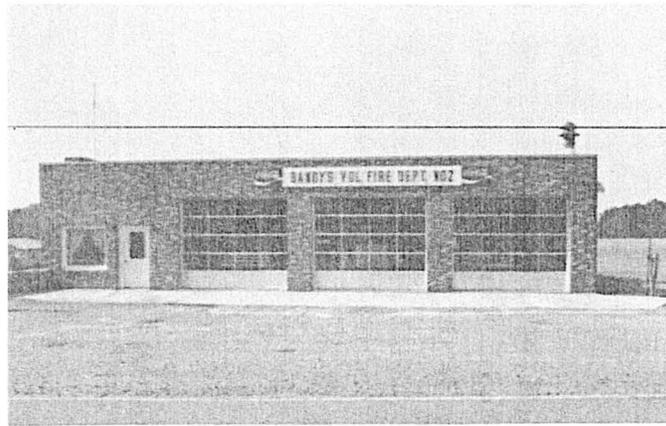
The third truck was transferred from the Number 1 station which was a 1966 American LaFrance. On June 24, 1979, open house was held for Number 2 station.

A new pumper-tanker was purchased in 1980 from Howe Equipment Company. This was placed at station Number 1.

There has been a lot of volunteer work done on both departments over the years for which we are very grateful.



Bandys Number 1



Bandys Number 2

HISTORY OF CATAWBA FIRE DEPARTMENT

Back in the early part of 1937, the Town Board of Catawba realized the need for a fire department in our town.

After much planning and discussion by the town fathers, a meeting was set on September 15, 1937, for the purpose of organizing the Catawba Fire Department. At this meeting, the constitution and by-laws of the Hickory Fire Department was read and most of the by-laws were adopted by the Catawba Fire Department.

The following officers were elected:

Neill Sherrill	Chief
R.L. Boggs	Assistant Chief
W.M. Rufty	Secretary and Treasurer
Gordon A. Drum	Superintendent of Alarms
Dr. Fred Y. Long	Doctor
R.M. Brown	Driver.

The department started with just one fire fighting unit, twenty-one regular members and eighteen honorary members.

The first Monday of each month was set for the regular meetings, which later was changed to the first Wednesday of each month.

On June 29, 1938, E.L. Huffman was elected as chief after Neill Sherrill retired from active duty. On June 6, 1939, R.M. Brown was elected and served as chief until he retired on his 58th birthday in October, 1965. Ray P. Robinson was elected in September, 1965 and served until 1972. Jerry Miller was then elected and served until 1980 when Joe Sigmon was elected, who is currently serving as chief.

The Fire Department is located in Town Hall. Today the Fire Department has forty-two members and equipment consists of one 750 gpm pumper, one 500 gpm pumper, an equipment van, a brush truck, two tanker trucks and a 6,500 watt generator. The present officers are:

Joe Sigmon	Chief
Carroll Yount	Assistant Chief (City)
Ronald Brown	Assistant Chief (County)

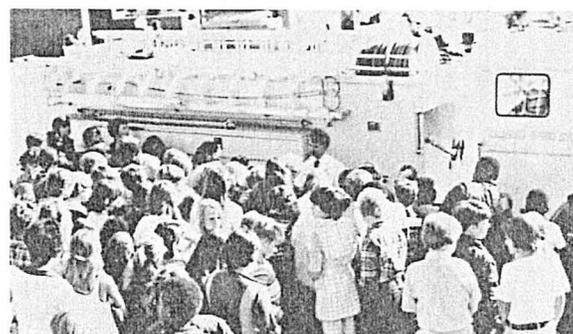
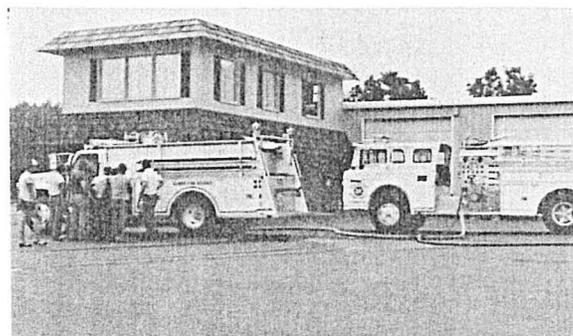


Catawba Fire Department — 1983

Catawba Fire Department — 1954



HISTORY OF CLAREMONT VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT



It was in the year of the charter of the Town of Claremont in 1893 that the Claremont Volunteer Fire Department was started. The first officials of the new town were J.D. Kelly, Mayor; John W. Setzer, W.A. Hoke and Jonas T. Sigmon as aldermen.

These men felt the need for fire protection for the community. The Claremont Bucket Brigade was begun with Knox Huffman, Jim Yount and Jake Isenhour, all deceased, serving the community.

Fires were fought by the bucket brigade until 1939 when the water works were completed and the city fathers purchased a two wheel hand pulled cart which had 500 feet of 2½" hose on a large reel.

It was in the year of 1939 when Hugh Hoke was fire chief that the city fathers purchased an American LaFrance Fire Truck. This truck was chain driven with a soda and acid tank of 100 gallons.

A 1956 Ford pumper truck was purchased in 1956 while Connley J. Sigmon was serving as fire chief. W.F. Lineberger took over as fire chief and he succeeded in paying off the debt of \$10,977 by accepting donations from in and out of town residents.

At this time the only other piece of equipment owned by the fire department was a Ford pickup which carried hose.

In 1960 the need for a larger department building was realized. The fire department along with the rescue squad and town board worked together to build the present location of the fire department. Since that time there have been several renovations to the building to add extra bays for the equipment that has been bought to serve the community and surrounding areas.

Under the direction of Fire Chief Jack Little in 1961 the department voted to adopt a set of By-Laws and a Constitution. Also the department voted to keep extensive records of all firemen.

Charles Y. Baker was elected as the chief in 1962. Under the direction of Chief Baker the department began to grow. Other needed equipment was purchased. The first item purchased was a "water wagon". The only cost for this truck was the purchase of tires. An old army weapons jeep was obtained for use in fighting woods and grass fires in the fire district. Funds were raised to pay for these items by holding fish fries, going door to door for donations and individual donations.

In 1970 the board opened the bids for another new truck. In February of 1971 a Ford c 900 pumper was delivered. This truck was paid for in 1975. Cost of the truck was \$34,000. During the next few years money was saved for the purchase of further equipment.

Charles Baker served the longest term of any fire chief from 1962 to 1976 when his health forced him to resign his position. He continues to serve the department and city council as a consultant and is at the department each day unless he is ill.

Rupert Little became the fire chief in 1976 and served until 1977. During this time the department was able to purchase a 1977 C 900 Ford 1,000 gpm pumper.

Charles E. Pope became the fire chief in 1977 and served until 1981. During Chief Pope's term of office two new pieces of equipment were purchased. A 1978 Chevrolet 4-wheel drive vehicle, to replace the old weapons carrier jeep, and a 1979 Ford F 700 pumper/tanker.

Michael Y. Baker was elected to the office in 1981 and is currently serving as fire chief. The local department is now getting ready to work up the specifications for another new apparatus to be ordered soon.

Officers serving in addition to Chief Baker are: Assistant Chiefs Tim Whitworth and Marshall Butler; Captains Kevin Isenhour and Terry Hefner; Lieutenants Kevin Little, Charles Helms and Mark Carpenter; Charles Baker, consultant and Tim Lowrance, Department Treasurer, who is also in charge of purchasing along with Chief Baker and Charles Baker.

The members of the department belong to the Catawba County Fireman's Association and the North Carolina Firemen's Association. All members who are up to date in their training hours are on the North Carolina Firemen's Pension Fund which is paid for by the city each year. All firemen are also covered by the Firemen's Relief Fund in case of injury.

Claremont Firemen are backed by a Ladies Auxiliary which is always ready to serve whenever needed.

Members of the Claremont Fire Department are always ready to serve the needs of their community and also for mutual aid whenever needed.

The fire department has a water supply of 385,000 gallons with their two water storage tanks. The department has 120 in town fire hydrants all national standard threads and over 13 miles of water lines.

For communications the department has a total of 2 base stations (one 4 channel), 15 Pelectron monitors, 31 minitars, 4 walkie talkies and 13 mobile units.

HISTORY OF CONOVER FIRE DEPARTMENT

The following history of the Conover Fire Department was taken from old records, some of which are incomplete, on file in the Town Office, Conover, North Carolina. In addition, certain further information has been obtained from Mr. W.W. Saunders, the first official fire chief of the town, and also from minutes of the meetings of the Town Board.

According to record, fire fighting prior to 1942 was handled by unorganized volunteers from within the town using hand operated wheelers with hose reels. Approximately 1930, a hose reel was attached to a town-owned truck, presumed to be one used for refuse collection and street work.

Since reference is made in the minutes pertaining to payment to the Newton Fire Department for fire fighting in the 1920's, it is assumed that they were called on to assist with major fires. Also in 1930, the Town Board agreed to pay Hickory Fire Department when called upon to assist in major fires.

In 1942, a new Ford truck pumper was purchased, equipped with American LaFrance equipment. The Conover Fire Department was organized with Mr. W.W. Saunders as fire chief. The department had two drivers, assisted by a volunteer department of fifteen men. The new truck had a pump capacity of 500 gallons and a booster tank capacity of 750 gallons.

Others serving in the years following Chief W.W. Saunders' tenure were Chief F.W. Moehlman, Chief Hugh Liem and Chief John F. Dellinger. There were possibly others of whom no records exist. The department was housed in the old Reformed Church.

In 1950, John Alvin Bolick was appointed fire chief and held that position until 1973. Since 1974, Calvin Pitman, William Larry Setzer and Ronald Kaylor have held the position of fire chief. In 1979, J. Reid Poovey, Jr. was appointed as first full-time fire chief, and is still serving this position.

A new Ford pumper, equipped with Howe fire apparatus and having a pump capacity of 500 gallons and a booster tank capacity of 500 gallons, was purchased in 1957, which has since been sold to Sugarloaf Fire Department in Alexander County.

During the late 1960's, miscellaneous mobile equipment was added. This equipment included a surplus weapons carrier, adapted for field and brush fires, and a military surplus jeep for transporting rescue and emergency equipment. This equipment has since been replaced with a 1978 Chevrolet four-wheel drive mini-pumper and a 1968 Chevrolet van.

In 1966, a new Ford pumper with Howe equipment was purchased. This pumper has a pump capacity of 1,000 gallons and a booster tank capacity of 500 gallons.

In 1971, a new Ford tanker truck, with a tank capacity of 1,500 gallons was purchased. This tanker truck is also equipped with a "Quick Dump Valve". The tanker truck was declared surplus in 1983 and sold. The original 1942 truck was sold to a small volunteer brigade near Louisville, Mississippi.

To date the department has had only one serious injury and has recorded no death as a result of fire fighting.

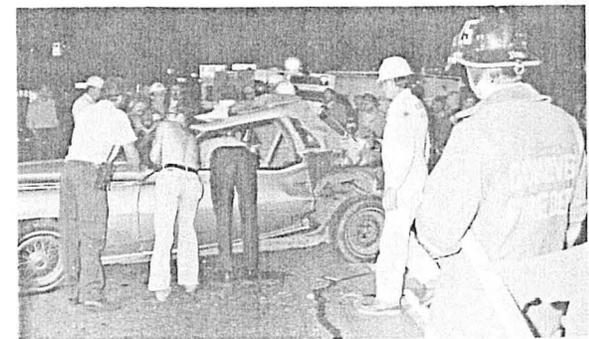
In 1979, the Conover Fire Department adopted NFPA "1001" Training Program.

In 1982, the City of Conover annexed the Western Area and included a large portion of the St. Timothy tax base. With this in mind, the Conover City Manager and Fire Chief agreed that the best solution would be to merge the two departments into one, with the city assuming all outstanding debts in exchange for all the St. Timothy assets.

After some time, it was decided that the two stations would operate under a fire chief — J. Reid Poovey, Jr., an assistant chief — Everette Lamberth and a district chief — Paul Yount and Larry Stezer for each station, operating independently of each other except in areas of training, standard operating procedures and budgets.

The record of community service of both stations proves the determination of the volunteers of both stations to provide the best service possible for all residents of the entire fire district and county.

At this time, Station No. 1 is equipped with a 1,250 gpm 1976 Mack, 1,000 gpm 1966 Ford, 1,250-gallon capacity 1971 International Tanker, 1978 Chevrolet mini-pumper, 1968 Chevrolet utility van and 1982 Ford chief's car.



HISTORY OF COOKSVILLE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

In the spring of 1967, the Cooksville community held an organizational meeting at the Cooksville Masonic Lodge. Cooksville Volunteer Fire Department was chartered in the fall of 1967.

Voyt Rudisill donated an acre of land, and a three-bay building with office and kitchen was constructed in early 1968.

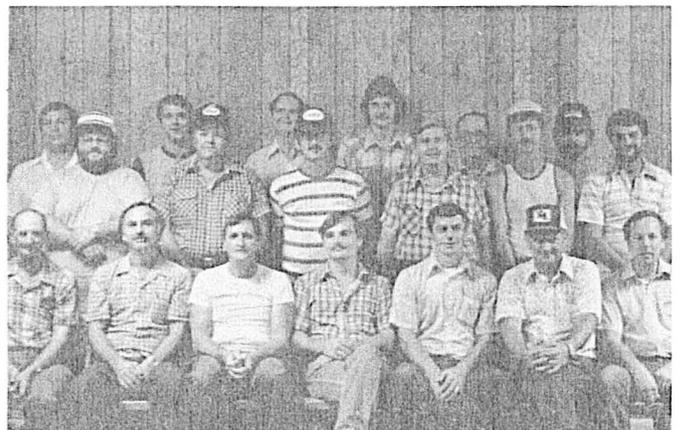
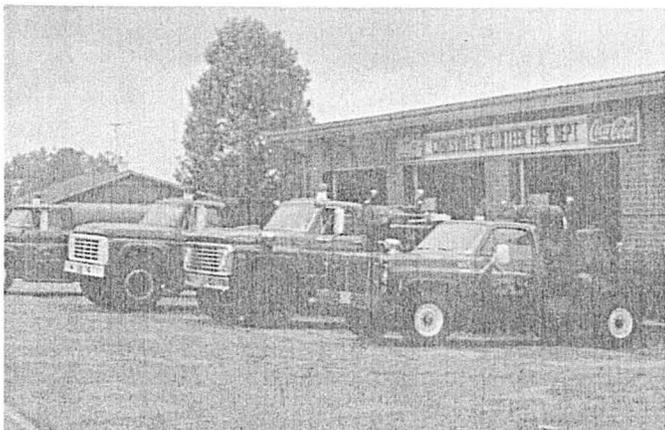
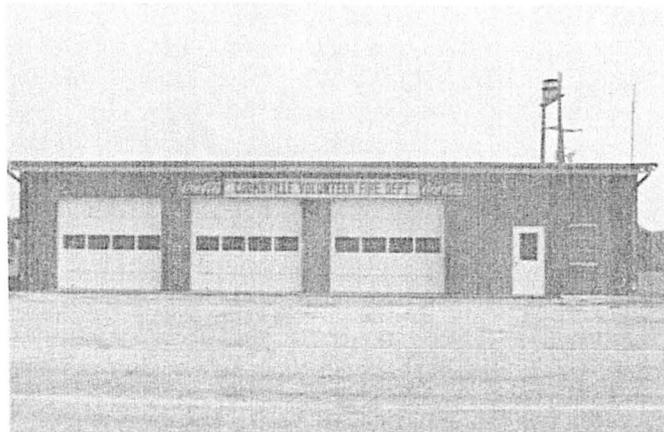
During the first years the Board of Directors was as follows: Voyt Rudisill, S.E. Wellman, Stowe Wright, Cecil Brittain, Ray Lackey, W.V. Rhoney, Hugh Hoyle, Bill Abee, Lester Huss, Dean Hood, and Glenn Rhoney. Voyt Rudisill has been president, S.E. Wellman has been vice president and Dean Hood has been treasurer since the department's organization.

Cooksville Volunteer Fire Department first purchased from an oil company a 1960 GMC tanker with a capacity of 1,000 gallons and used a 1941 Ford pumper on loan from Catawba County. Next the department purchased an old Army bush truck, a 1945 Dodge, which has since been replaced. A 1971 Ford pumper, 750 gpm, was purchased next and the pumper on loan was returned. In 1975 a Chevrolet bush truck with a 210 gallon tank was purchased. The latest purchase was a 1977 Ford pumper-tanker with a 1,500 gallon capacity.

In 1978, the department doubled the building's size which included a carpeted meeting room.

The department has had three fire chiefs: Graydon Strawer 1967-1968, Tom Wise 1969-1973 and Vernon Rhoney 1974-Present. Cooksville Volunteer Fire Department began with 20 active firemen and now consists of 27 firemen and 20 ladies auxiliary members which have helped in fund raising as well as donating equipment.

Cooksville firemen would like to take this opportunity to thank the people of the community, in and out of the Cooksville Fire District, for thier support, financial and moral.



HISTORY OF FAIRBROOK VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Late in the year of 1957, the members of the Hi-Neighbor Club, living along the Old Lincolnton Road, in the Barger School Section, brought up the subject of fire protection. In order to gain this protection, a Volunteer Fire Department was needed. The first meeting to discuss the organization of a department was held at the Corbin Greene residence. Further meetings were subsequently held at Temple Baptist Church and at New Jerusalem Lutheran Church where the plans were laid out and the first twelve Board of Directors were elected.

The name selected was Fairbrook Volunteer Fire Department #3, as this was the third volunteer department in Catawba County. The name Fairbrook was derived by use of a combination of Fairgrove and Brookford. Land at the intersection of Highway 64-70 and Startown Road was leased from Mrs. Zene Barger for the purpose of constructing a building to house the department.

On August 26, 1958, the Directors elected the following firemen to their respective offices: Chief — Rupert C. Lewis, Assistant Chief — Ken Kahill, Captain — Richard Carter, First Lieutenant - Horace Mauser, Second Lieutenant — Claude Rudisill, Secretary — Worth Kanipe, and Treasurer — Banks Shepard.

The first pumper was purchased from the Howe Company at a cost of \$9,930.27. A KB-10 five ton truck was purchased for \$150 to be used as a tanker. Moser and Shook Lumber Company submitted the accepted bid of \$4,190 to build the department building on April 28, 1958. Open house for the new Fire Department was held on October 3, 1958.

The Fairbrook Rescue Squad was formed in 1959. A.C. Woody was appointed chairman of the committee to form the squad at the May meeting. A Packard Ambulance was purchased and they were in business. A few years later the Packard was replaced with a Cadillac Ambulance. While generally ignored by Catawba County in the past few years the Fairbrook Rescue Squad is still a fully accredited Rescue Squad recognized by the State of North Carolina and is available to answer calls at any time.

Ken Kahill was elected Chief in 1962. He served in this capacity for seven years. Chief Kahill was one of the pioneers that brought radio communications and dispatch to Catawba County.

In July, 1964, Fairbrook purchased a tanker from Oren Roanoke Corporation for \$10,114. In June of 1966, they purchased a Dodge Panel Truck to be used as a rescue vehicle.

In mid 1966, the Board recognized the need for a full time fireman and employed Gene Houser in May. On August 11, 1969, Wardell Dettter became Chief of Fairbrook succeeding Ken Kahill.

Bids for a new pumper were discussed at the April 1, 1971, meeting. It was voted to give the order to American LaFrance at \$50,281, which became Unit #56.

In 1976 an International Transtar 4300 was purchased by Fairbrook for use as a large tanker. Its total cost was \$29,573. The year 1977 saw the department purchase a large van for use as an equipment carrier and rescue truck. Also in late 1977 Fairbrook purchased Unit #52. This is a White Road Boss 2 that serves as a pumper/tanker. It carries over 2,100 gallons of water, has two pumps, a foam tank and a deck gun. Its total cost was \$109,070.63. This unit was designed by Fairbrook for the needs of the community and has consistently met and exceeded their expectations.

In July 1982, Fairbrook Volunteer Fire Department held their 25th Anniversary. Many past and present members were honored for their service. An award was given to Raymond Townsend for 25 years of continuous service.

Due to an increased need for transportation to training schools and other activities, Fairbrook purchased a Dodge Van in July of 1983. This is Unit #53 and has been outfitted with a 10 channel scanning radio and tone alert encoder that is capable of alerting any department in the county.

Due to increased training and awareness, as well as up grading of equipment on a constant basis, Fairbrook Volunteer Fire Department strives to serve the community as it deserves to be served; with loyalty, devotion, and fire protection second to none.



HISTORY OF HICKORY FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Hickory Fire Department was founded in the late 1870's and has grown to a full-paid department of seventy-eight full-time men and women.

The department has four stations, one central station and three out or substations. Four first-line pumper trucks, one 85-foot aerial ladder truck, three reserve pumpers, one reserve ladder truck, and one rescue truck.

The Chief of the department is Chief Larson H. Moore, and he is directly under and responsible to the City Manager. All other men of the Department answer to the Chief. The other men and officers are as follows: Three Assistant Chiefs who work a 24-hour shift with the men. The Fire Prevention Bureau consists of three men who answer to the Chief of the department and work from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. One Training Officer who is directly under the Chief.

The rest of the department is divided into three shifts, "A", "B" and "C" of twenty-three men each with one of the Assistant Chiefs assigned to each shift. One Captain assigned to each pumper company, one Lieutenant assigned to the aerial ladder, and one Dispatcher assigned to each shift.

The pumper companies consist of one Captain, one Driver, one Nozzleman, and one Hydrantman. Each man is trained to perform either job; so if one should be out sick or hurt, one of the other men can fall right in and do his job.

The Ladder Company consists of one Lieutenant, one Driver and Laddermen, who are also trained to fill in other jobs as needed.

The above men work a 24-hour shift, starting at 8:00 a.m. daily, and work until 8:00 a.m. the next day.

A normal shift consists of the following: "A" Shift will report to work at 8:00 a.m. Each man will check with his relief on "B" shift to learn what has happened the past forty-eight hours while he was off. If any streets are blocked or closed; if any water or hydrants are cut off or out of service; if the plants or manufacturing companies have water or their automatic systems have been cut off for any reason; and any other information that may be of importance in case of fire or emergency. This is done in order that each man may know as much as possible in advance of any obstacles that could hamper his work. The following day, the other shift, "B", will do the same, etc.

At 8:15 a.m., all of the radios on the trucks are checked and tested to see that they are also working properly.

Following the 8:15 a.m. radio test, the men may go to the drill field for ladder practice, or to practice laying hose lines, pump operations, or possibly have a class at the station on water lines throughout the city, map study, proper ways to ventilate burning buildings, the layouts of buildings, how best to control and combat certain types of fires, and numerous other phases of firefighting techniques. Or they may spend the afternoon cutting grass, raking leaves, or various other jobs around the station, such as cleaning and waxing the vehicles.

This is an average workday of normal activities at the Hickory Fire Department. When an alarm sounds, everything is dropped, regardless, in order to save life and property. The yearly average of calls responded to by the department is 2½ per day; however, there could be several days without a fire, or there may be several fires in a one-day period. No matter what time of day or night the trucks go out, when they return to the station, they are cleaned, filled with water and gas, and everything is checked to see if it can immediately be used again, should it be necessary.

The Fire Department also maintains all of the trucks and cars with mechanics that are also firemen. All repairs and servicing of vehicles is done at the central station. All vehicles are serviced and checked on a regular basis.

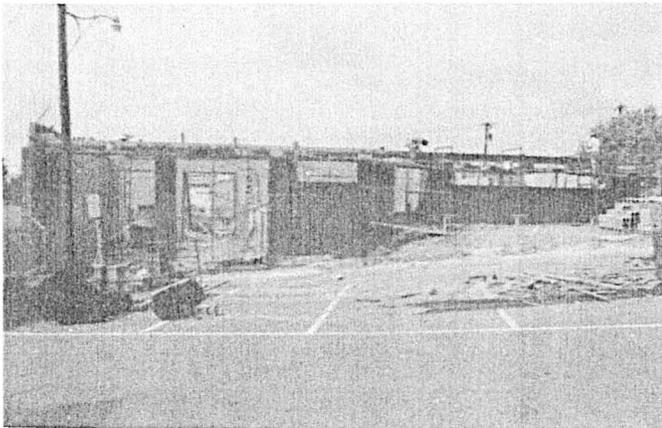
The Fire Prevention Bureau conducts educational programs of fire safety for schools, plants, and organizations. They are constantly checking buildings and investigating all unusual types of fires. It is their job to enforce the laws of the city and the state pertaining to fire prevention and arson. They also work directly with the City Building Inspection Department and review all plans for new constructions, alterations, and occupancy change to insure compliance with the Building and Fire Codes.



Hickory Headquarters, Station No. 1



Hickory Station No. 2



Hickory Station No. 3, Under Construction



Hickory Airport Station

HISTORY OF LONG VIEW FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Long View Fire Department came into being on August 9, 1952, after being served for many years by the Hickory Fire Department. The Long View Lions Club met at Long View School for the purpose of establishing a volunteer fire department to serve the town. At this meeting Chief Donald Shuford and Mr. Harry Yount of the Hickory Fire Department said they would help in training the new firemen. At this meeting, also, officers were elected and goals were set. Mr. Eugene C. Annas was elected chief. Soon more members were added and their first project was to build a new town office and fire station. Through volunteer work and donated materials, the project was soon completed. A 1914 pumper was leased from the City of Hickory for \$1.00 per year and the newly formed department was in business to serve the citizens of Long View.

The dedicated men did not stop here, they wanted a truck they could call their own. With a lot of hard work they purchased a used 1951 Dodge pumper in 1952.

Chief Annas resigned in December of 1953 and Charlie Lail was appointed to this position which he held until May of 1956 at which time Charlie Eggers was elected chief.

These hardworking men continued to raise money through different projects and donations and in 1959 purchased a new 750 gpm pumper.

In order to lower the fire insurance rate from a class 9 to class 7 the town took over the fire department. Russel T. Robinson was elected chief and 2 full-time firemen were hired in January of 1962, the water system was improved as was communications.

In 1968 a new 1,000 gpm pumper was purchased.

With the coming of low rent housing and new industry, the town, in 1975, purchased a new 1,250 gmp pumper with a 50' telesquirt to better serve these people.

The department has continued to grow and in 1977 purchased a 1,200 gallon tanker.

Ernest E. Riley, Sr. was hired as full-time chief in September of 1980 when Chief Robinson retired.

At present the department consists of five full-time personnel, 22 volunteers and six pieces of equipment. With the improving of conditions in personnel, communications and the water system, the town, in 1982, lowered its insurance rate to class 5



HISTORY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

The fire department was chartered in January of 1962 as Mountain View Volunteer Fire Department #4 of Catawba County, Inc. (a non-profit organization) to serve the area between Henry Fork River on the north and east, the Jacobs Fork River on the south and the Burke County line on the west.

The finances of the department began with \$4,000 pledged by the local people and a faith that the local people would support the department financially for equipment, building and operation of a department which the community can be proud and with which the firemen can adequately protect the lives and property of this community. One acre of land was donated on which the original building and well were constructed at a cost of approximately \$2,000 for materials. The balance of the materials and labor was donated by members of the community.

In November of 1963, the department began answering fire calls with a new 1963 pumper truck and a used 1952 water tanker. The cost of these trucks and related equipment amounted to approximately \$16,000.

During the year of 1969 a new water tanker and a four-wheel drive brush truck were added to the equipment. These were needed to enable the firemen to carry enough water to extinguish a majority of the fires quickly and stop the spread of grass, brush and woods fires before they spread to houses and other structures. The cost of these two trucks was approximately \$14,000.

In 1970, delivery was taken on a new combination pumper-tanker which serves as a water tanker and back-up pumper should there be two fires at the same time or should there be a breakdown of the No. 1 pumper. The cost of this truck and equipment was approximately \$23,000. The truck replaced the 1952 tanker.

In 1981 delivery was taken of a new 1,000 gpm American LaFrance pumper. The purchase of this truck provides much greater pumping capabilities, as well as adding a second pumper and freeing the 1963 pumper to serve as a drafting and supply truck. Also in 1981, a new gable roof was constructed to the fire station, replacing the leaky existing roof.

In April of 1981, Chief Eddie Whitener and the Mountain View Fire Department was presented a top safety award from the North Carolina Safety Council for their efforts in conducting a fire prevention campaign encouraging the safe and proper use of home heating woodstoves in Catawba County.

In 1982, the department reconstructed the existing 1974 four-wheel drive brush truck, making it both safer and more efficient.

Annually, the department participates in countywide fire prevention activities, promoting and encouraging fire safety throughout the county.

Smoke detectors are offered for sale to the public through the fire department as an ongoing project to better protect lives and property in the community.

During the past few years, the department has been involved in developing and maintaining additional water points throughout the area to better enable them to have sufficient water supplies for fire fighting needs, as well as working toward the goal of a better insurance rating.

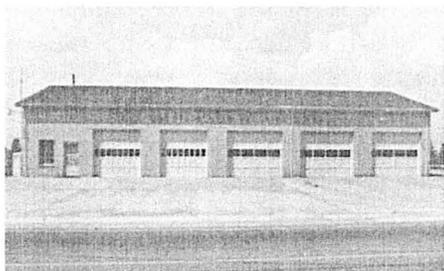
1983 ROSTER

Kent Brown
Greer Buff
George Byers
Reggie Campbell
Jay Carroll
Charlie Dickerson
Martin Frank
Richard Frank

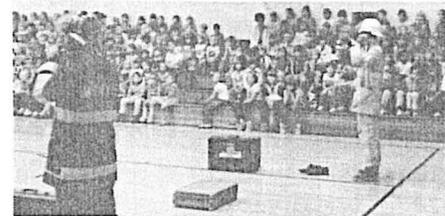
Buren Hamrick
Coye Hildebran
Tim Jones
Eugene Lackey
Mike London
Tim Marlowe
Tim Osborne
Arthur Pitts

Alton Price
Harold Price
Nelson Price
David Pruitt
Charles Rhodarmer
Mike Townsend
Erroll Ward
Roy Waters

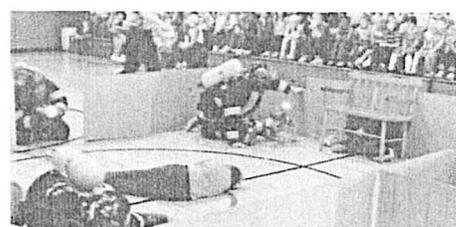
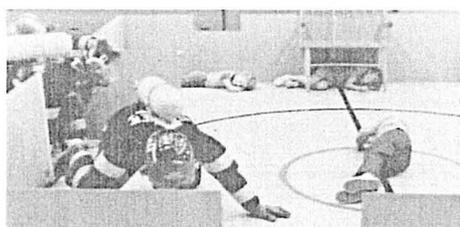
Tony Waters
Eddie Whitener
John Whitener
Luther Whitener
Claude Wilson
Mike Wilson
James Worley



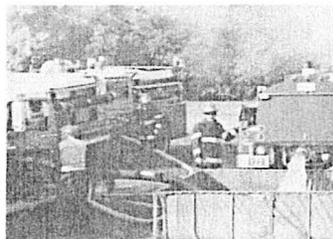
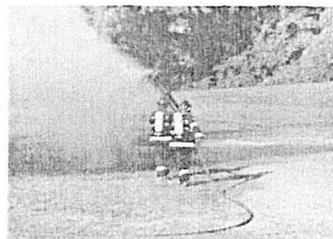
Mountain View 1983



Here, firefighters show the proper use of protective clothing and self-contained breathing apparatus as Training Captain George Byers points out the importance of this equipment.



Fire Prevention Captain David Pruitt explains to students how to safely escape a house fire and points out the proper places in a room to wait for help if you are trapped. Firefighters also illustrate the way they would perform a search and rescue in a room.



Here, Mountain View firefighters illustrate fire attack and water supply methods to the students of Mountain View Elementary School as a demonstration held in conjunction with Fire Prevention Week. This demonstration was done so these children could better understand a fire department's operating procedures during a fire situation. Assistant Chief Erroll Ward explained the events taking place.

HISTORY OF OXFORD FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Oxford Volunteer Fire Department is located on the Oxford School Road on Route 1, Claremont.

People of the community were served by the Claremont, Conover and St. Stephens volunteer fire departments prior to the forming of their local department.

A group of concerned citizens met in 1966 at the Oxford Elementary School to discuss the possibility of forming an area department so the community would have adequate fire protection. On May 16, 1966, the Oxford Fire Protection Association Inc. was formed and Glenn P. Brown was elected as the president.

After subsequent work and meetings were held at the Oxford Community House the Oxford Volunteer Fire Department was chartered on February 23, 1967, with 31 members. Glenn Ray Boston was elected as the chief of the new department. Of the 31 charter members, six of them are still active firemen.

The charter members and citizens in the community built a two-bay station using donated materials and labor. When the first home of the fire department was completed in the fall of 1967 a new Ford pumper truck arrived. They purchased a used truck in the spring of 1968 and in the fall of 1968, a used brush truck.

The money for the operation and maintenance and the purchase of the new pumper truck was raised through donations, fish fries and other fund-raising events. In 1971, the firemen used proceeds from the fund-raising projects to purchase a 10-acre tract of land on Highway 16. A new brush truck was added in 1975 and a new utility van in 1977.

The land that was purchased on Highway 16 was sold in 1967 and a portion of the proceeds was used to purchase a 7.5 acre tract of land on the Oxford School Road. The remainder of the money was placed in a special new building fund account.

The Board of Directors in early 1979 appointed a building committee to explore the possibility of building a new larger station on the tract of land that they owned approximately one-fourth mile from the old station. Jerry L. Sigmon served as the chairman of the building committee. This committee prepared a tentative layout of the new building and it was approved by the board.

Firemen were successful in obtaining a federal loan to supplement the funds that were raised by the firemen and association. William P. Reinhardt and Robert Smith, Newton architects, were employed to design the building to specifications. Following the bidding process, Roger W. Isaac Building Contractors, Inc. of Conover was awarded the contract on June 23, 1980.

Site and yard work was done by firemen and other volunteers with donations of materials and equipment.

Firemen moved the trucks into the new station on Sunday, November 30, 1980. Open house was held on Sunday, December 7, 1980, from 1 to 5 p.m. The highlight was a visit from Santa Claus, who came in on the WSOC-TV Chopper 9 helicopter.

The latest addition to the department was a 1983 GMC (1,000 gallon) pumper tanker.

The department now has 27 members. The present officers are: Kenneth F. Hollar, Chief; James Sigmon, Assistant Chief; Chris Brown, Captain; Tony Hollar, Lieutenant. Mr. J.W. Abernethy is serving as President of the Fire Association.

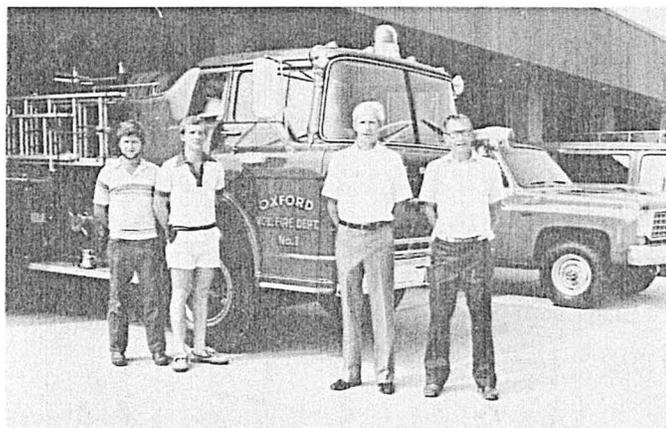
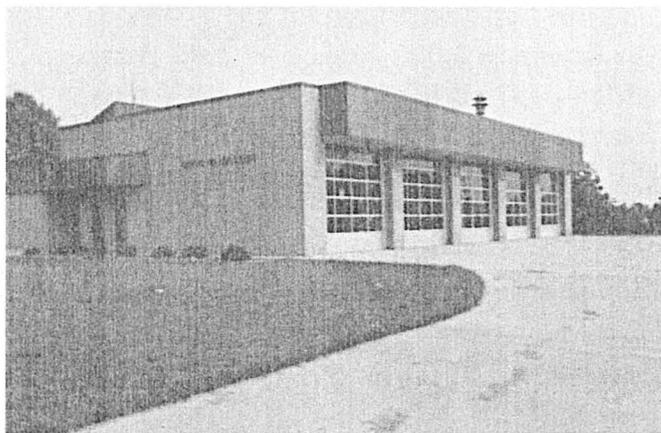
1983 ROSTER

Glenn R. Boston
Casey Brown
Chris Brown
Roger Brown
Tracy Brown
Wayne Caldwell
Doug Carrigan

Howard W. Carrigan
Jim Christenbury
Pat Coley
Jimmy Fox
Ron Greaseon
R. Preston Hedrick, Jr.
Kenneth F. Hollar

Tony Hollar
Marshall Hunt
Robert Miller
Gene T. Setzer
G. Franklin Setzer
Jerry E. Sherrill
Mike Shook

Allen Sigmon
Blake Sigmon
James L. Sigmon
Jerry L. Sigmon
Robert Sigmon
David Trent



HISTORY OF PROPST CROSSROAD VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

In 1961, a group of people from the Propst Crossroads, Mt. View and Banoak areas met to discuss the possibility of forming a fire department in this section of Catawba County.

After several meetings it was decided to form two departments, one in the Mt. View section and one in the Propst Crossroad section. A group of men were selected to proceed with getting a chapter. After meeting with the County Attorney, Mr. Merritt, a charter was secured. The Board of Directors appointed a Building Committee, an Equipment Committee, and a Finance Committee. After much hard work, there were enough people interested to proceed with a building. The building consisted of three bays and an assembly room at an estimated cost of \$7,000. During this time the Equipment Committee wrote the specifications for a truck. A 1962 Ford F-800 was bought and contacted to Hafer Motor Company of Newton, N.C.; the equipment was contracted to Dixie Fire and Safety of Lenoir, N.C. for a Ward LaFrance pumper and equipment in October, 1962.

The Board of Directors asked all available men for applications and many were received. They selected a slate of officers as follows:

F.E. Hoke — Chief
D.D. Hilton — Assistant Chief
Eugene Clay — Captain
Fred Abernethy — First Lieutenant
Dick Fulbright — Second Lieutenant

These first officers served for the years 1962-1963.

Due to the large size of the district a second fire department, the Cooksville Volunteer Fire Department, was formed by the citizens of the west side of the district.

Propst Crossroad Fire Department later bought a weapons carrier; it was rebuilt and a pumper installed to fight grass and woods fires. A used 1947 tanker truck was bought from Viewmont Fire Department. A 10,000 gallon water tank was also raised. In 1972-1973 two new bays of brick veneer had been completed. The department now has a five-truck bay and a large assembly room. New hose, hose washer and other equipment has been added as needed within the past year. Propst Crossroad is a 9 AA Insurance Rated District.

Chief Hoke attributes the success of the fire department to the interest and active participation by members of the community and the fire department. The Ladies Auxiliary has helped furnish much of the equipment.



HISTORY OF ST. STEPHENS VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

In early 1957, through the efforts of the St. Stephens Lions Club, the St. Stephens Volunteer Department was formed. In early summer a public organizational meeting was held at St. Stephens Elementary School. At this time a group of men were elected to serve as the board of directors. These men are as follows: Emery Carpenter, D.D. Granger, John Shook, Jack Hall, Harry Drum, Stewart Steel, Cloyd Propst, (Red) H.H. Smith, and Grover Herman.

The Fire Department was supported by contributions, fund raising drives and the County Contracts. However, in 1973 a Fire District Tax was voted in to help with the operating costs. Presently the tax rate is 1.2¢ per \$100.00 property value, which is the lowest in the county.

Also, in 1957 a charter with the state was filed for and received, and an American La France 500 gpm pumper on a 1957 Chevrolet chassis was purchased. A contract was also entered into with Mr. Fred Shell to build a two bay building and lease it for the use of the Fire Department.

In the fall of 1957 another meeting was held to organize the firemen. At that time Mr. Fred Shell was elected to serve as Chief, and served at this post until 1976, when Mr. Wade Hefner, our present Chief, was elected.

The American La France pumper arrived in Hickory in December of 1957 and the Fire Department officially began operation in early 1958. In March the contract was signed with Catawba County to provide fire protection of a given area. Also in March of 1959, a request was filed with the North Carolina Fire Insurance Rating Department for insurance ratings within a 4 mile radius of the Fire Department, this was received the last of 1959. St. Stephens protects approximately \$248 million in property value.

In 1967 a piece of property was purchased and the present Fire Station was erected. At the present time we have 28 firemen on roll. The Fire Station presently has the following equipment: one 1976 Chevrolet with 1,000 gpm pumper — 500 gallon booster tank, one 1982 Chevrolet with 1,000 gpm pumper — 1,000 gallon booster tank, one 1976 Chevrolet — 1,200 gallon tanker with 300 gpm pump, and one 1979 1 ton Chevrolet — 250 gallon tank with 400 gpm pump.

The department recently honored Assistant Chief Jerry Kale, Captain Jackie Simmons and Training Officer Wayne Bloch for their service of 26 years to the St. Stephens Fire Department.



HISTORY OF ST. TIMOTHY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Approximately 58 Conover area residents met in February, 1971, at St. Timothy Lutheran Church on Old Hwy. 70 near Conover for a meeting called by the Conover Rural Fire District Committee.

After discussion, it was decided that the needs of the rural area formerly served by the Conover Fire Department could best be met by forming a new fire department.

The following men, Dwight Rockett, Nelson Sigmon and Dewey Hunsucker, were elected to serve on the Board of Directors along with the original Rural Committee consisting of Chairman Grover Herman, Vance Hollar, Claude Hefner, Michael Rowe and Paul Bolick.

During the spring of 1971, many meetings were held by the Board of Directors in finalizing plans for this new department. County Fire Marshall David Yount and Captain Harry Yount of the Hickory Fire Department were instrumental by offering much needed advice.

The fire department was chartered as the St. Timothy Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. on March 15, 1971.

At the Board of Directors meeting on March 23, 1971, Nelson Sigmon was elected chief of the department. An organizational meeting of the firemen was held at St. Stephens Fire Department. The following were elected officers for the first year: George E. Lafone — Assistant Chief, Charles M. Sigmon — Captain, Paul G. Yount and Dale Stewart — Lieutenants, Connelly Huffman — Secretary, Wayne Thornburg — Treasurer and Rev. K.H. Reidenbach — Chaplain. A total of 29 firemen attended a 50 hour Introduction to Fire Training Course also held at the St. Stephens Fire Department.

A new brick building to house the fire department was constructed east of Herman Sipe and Co. by that company and rented to the department. Equipment with a value of approximately \$60,000 was purchased during the first year of operation. This includes a new 1971 Ward-LaFrance 1,000 gallon diesel pumper, a 1971 International 1,200 gallon tanker, a military type brush buggy and miscellaneous items such as air packs, turn-out gear, etc.

From its inception in 1971 until today, the fire department has continued to grow, with the addition of new equipment and expanded facilities. The original fire station has been purchased from Herman Sipe and Co. and has been renovated and expanded to accommodate more equipment and vehicles and to provide a lounge and meeting area.

The fire department has purchased four new trucks since it began in 1971. Today, the fire department has in service the original 1971 Ward LaFrance 1,000 gpm diesel pumper, a 1974 Dodge mini-pumper, a 1976 Kenworth 2,000 gmp pumper-tanker, a 1979 Kenworth 2,000 gpm pumper-tanker with a remote controlled Santa Rosa 1,000 gpm turret nozzle and a 1983 GMC 1,250 gallon tanker.

The rapid growth of the City of Conover, involving the annexation of much of the industrial area in the St. Timothy Fire District, led the Board of Directors to enter into a merger agreement with the City of Conover.

In 1982, the St. Timothy Volunteer Fire Department merged with the Conover Fire Department.

The St. Timothy Fire Department has been led by three chiefs: Nelson Sigmon, Charles Sigmon and the present District Chief — Paul G. Yount.

The new organization of the two fire departments operate with Reid Poovey, Jr. — Chief of the Conover Fire Department, Larry Setzer — District Chief of Conover Station #1 and Paul G. Yount — District Chief of St. Timothy, Conover #2. The area served by other stations has been divided along Interstate 40 with the St. Timothy Station covering I-40 and all areas north and west, and Conover #1 covering all areas south and east of I-40.

The smooth transition in the merger with the Conover Fire Department exemplifies the dedication and determination of the St. Timothy Volunteer Firemen to continue to provide excellent fire protection to the community.

HISTORY OF VIEWMONT VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Viewmont Volunteer Fire Department was organized in July, 1957 with delivery of their first truck which was a county owned 1952 Ford 500 gpm Pumper, previously stationed at the Hickory Fire Department to provide fire service to the outlying areas. The department began operation with approximately 22 volunteer firemen, with Mr. Donald W. Bennison being the first chief. The site and building were provided by the late Mr. Paul Sigmon. This same building, with one addition, still houses the Viewmont Fire Department.

The next truck that the department acquired was a Diamond-T with a 1,000 gallon capacity tank and was basically built by the members of the department to serve as a tanker.

For a period of time Viewmont answered fire calls in many areas of the county including St. Stephens, Fairbrook, Mt. View, Houcks Chapel and Alexander County.

During the first few years of operation, many advances were made by the department, such as providing protective clothing for the firemen, additional firefighting equipment, and many hours of schooling in firefighting techniques. The Viewmont Fire Department was supported by donations from the community until a fire tax was levied in the mid 1960's. At this time, the department purchased a 1965 GMC 1,200 gallon tanker. The old tanker was then sold to the Propst Crossroads Fire Department. The 1965 tanker and the 1952 Ford pumper are still in service today and providing fire protection for the community. In addition to these, the department also has a 1980 Grumman Firecat 1,000 gmp pumper on a GMC chassis, which was placed in service in June, 1980; thus providing even better service to the community and county as well as added safety for the firemen. It was at this time that the station was enlarged to house all three trucks.

During the past 26 years the department has had 7 chiefs and many firefighters with the current roster totaling 25. All of the firefighters have been volunteers with full time jobs in addition to their duties with the fire department; answering fire calls day or night to help when they can to protect their friends and neighbors as well as their property.

The governing body of the Fire Department is a Board of Directors consisting of citizens throughout the fire district, each serving three year terms. There are nine members of the Board of Directors for the Viewmont Fire Department.

The Ladies Auxiliary of the Viewmont Fire Department consists of 11 members and provides support and encouragement to the men. Like the firemen, they too will be there day or night to provide whatever service, not only to the firemen, but also to the people of the community who may need their help.

Viewmont prides itself at being first as it was the first rural fire department organized in Catawba County and also had the first female firefighter, who was a member of the department during the late 1970's.

CURRENT ROSTER:

Ken Poovey, Chief
Ronald Killian, Captain
Jeffrey Gouge, Lieutenant
Douglas Holbrook
William Nickolson
Mark Romeo
John Sher
Mark Suddreth

Michael Rink, Assistant Chief
Lee Leonard, Captain
Michael Bovingdon, Chaplian
Carl Hollar
Stuart Reid
Bobby Scuggs
David Smith
Steve Townsend
Paul Williams

David Campbell, Captain
George Desrosiers, Lieutenant
Clifton Cartledge, Sec./Treas.
Phillip Mosteller
Gary Rhodes
Joseph Sheets
Kevin Smith
Scott Willard

