

SOUVENIR EDITION

HISTORY

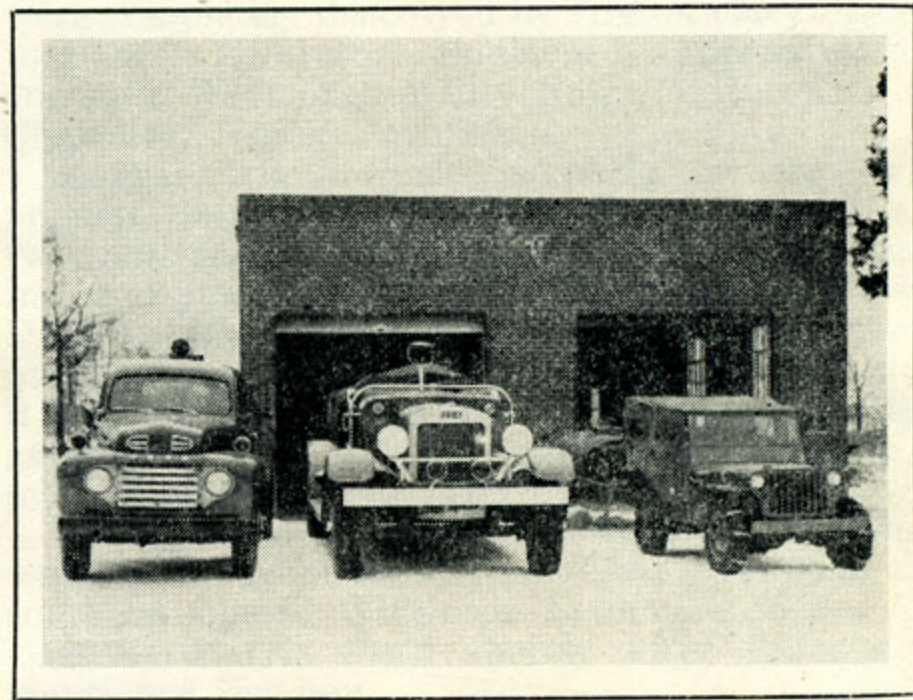
of

*Wilkinson Boulevard
Volunteer
Fire Department*

2925 WILKINSON BOULEVARD

1948

HISTORY OF THE
FIRE DEPARTMENT



"YOUR FIRE DEPT."

HISTORY - WILKINSON BOULEVARD VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

On the first day of May, 1943, two houses were completely destroyed by fire on Gary Street, just off Wilkinson Boulevard, approximately one mile West of the City limits of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina.

Several neighborhood property owners were present, doing what could be done to save these two, plus the adjacent houses, with no fire fighting equipment other than 3-4" garden hoses. Unbelievable success was achieved with these garden hoses in saving adjoining property, and it was discussed at length by three men present as a comparison to what could have been done if more equipment had been available.

The government completed an eight (8) inch water main from the City of Charlotte along the southern side of Wilkinson Boulevard to the Air Base at Morris Field shortly after the above-mentioned incident.

A meeting was called of all persons in the immediate neighborhood, interested in fire protection, and it was decided to investigate possibilities of installing fire plugs on subject main. A committee was appointed to obtain information as to installation cost, and rental fee.

The old saying, "The best committee, a committee of three, with two sick in bed," was

negative in this case. The plugs were installed with no money on hand and with no money promised. Each plug was assigned a caretaker and it was up to these two men to obtain initial cost, plus rental fee, from the people.

It was found after installation of plugs, that hose and nozzles were needed if water was to be transferred from the plugs to the fire.

A meeting was called to discuss the problem of hose. It was immediately decided at this meeting that a name was badly needed for the organization, and after much discussion, the Wilkinson Boulevard Volunteer Fire Department name was decided upon. An election of officers was held, with the following men elected:

President-----J. F. Gilreath Sr.
Vice President-----W. B. Toole
Secretary-----Webb A. Mauney
Treasurer-----Peyton Davenport
Fire Chief-----Oscar L. Jenkins
Assistant Fire Chief-----Paul Bailey

The Fire Chief was instructed to buy 400 feet of 2½" single jacket fire hose and two (2) nozzles.

After purchase of hose, it was decided by the group that one-half the hose be kept at one place with nozzle, and one-half to be kept at another, close to each of the plugs. A hydrant wrench was not to be had at any price, however, the City Water Department was kind enough to loan one, to be kept until such time as the purchase of one could be made.

Another meeting was called and it was decided

that monthly meetings were in order until unit was in good operating order. Plans were made to raise money to cover the indebtedness incurred, which at this time amounted to some \$425.00. A fire fighting group was organized and a plan worked out as to membership and dues. The organization seemed to be on the road to success when the question of liability arose. Each person present realized the problem at hand, but no one dreamed of the prolonged agony in store before the problem could be solved.

Several members contacted responsible county officials and were told that incorporation was the only available way of protection against liability. This advice was brought out in a called meeting, but the cost was too great for the small number interested, so the battle continued.

For the next few meetings nothing could be accomplished because all suggestions and recommendations would invariably lead to liability. Practically all persons lost interest and a period of six to eight months passed with nothing being done.

By the fall of 1946, several young men had returned from service. With this idea in mind the president called a meeting, hoping to re-create some interest, at least in the younger set. It was decided at this meeting that a meeting be called during the first week of January, 1947, and elect new officers.

Much response was enjoyed and a new group of men were voted to run the organization for one year, with their term ending December 31, 1947.

The following men were elected to office:

President-----R. L. Winston
Vice President-----J. F. Gilreath, Jr.
Secretary-----H. A. Bingham
Treasurer-----Peyton Davenport

A two wheel cart was discussed to be used in hauling the hose from the existing location to the fire. After some discussion this possibility was abandoned, and a trailer purchase was decided upon. Cars with trailer hitches were to be used in pulling the trailer.

Permission was granted by the owners of a lot, the southeast corner of Crestwood Avenue and Wilkinson Boulevard, to build a building to house the trailer, and hose. A building 12' by 24' was erected one Saturday by volunteer labor from the neighborhood.

The thought occurred shortly after completion of the above building, that we should be able to purchase a Fire Engine from War Assets at a price which this small group could afford. This project was assigned to a committee which came up with favorable reports. The steering committee immediately started functioning, and the idea of having a benefit show with the grand prize of a new 1947 Ford, surmised. A 1941 Army Holabird Fire Engine was secured from the Government at a very good price and the money was borrowed from a bank with several members signing the note.

Now the Fire Department was equipped with the fire equipment fought for so hard, but a fairly large bill was staring all hands in the face.

With the cooperation of all the members of the Department plus many public service minded citizens in Mecklenburg County, the benefit show proved to be a huge success. Enough money was realized from this event to pay for the fire truck, plus enough to build a sizable fire station, provided corners were cut.

The liability and financing problems had been carried to one of our State House of Representatives, and with his efforts plus those of other Representatives and Senators in Raleigh, a bill was passed giving Mecklenburg County the power to hold an election in any fire zone in the county, taxing the people and spending \$18,000 for fire purposes in the set zone. This was certainly a step forward in Volunteer fire fighting in North Carolina.

Another committee had been functioning during these busy times. The papers were properly drawn by the County Attorney, and the Wilkinson Voulevard Volunteer Fire Department was incorporated. Hence, one of the greatest obstacles confronting the department had come to an end.

A lot located at 2925 Wilkinson Boulevard was very generously donated to the Department and a fire station 30' by 60' was built.

Fires were not too frequent, however, several calls were answered during these times, and much property saved.

Financing, the major problems since securing the fire engine, was overcome time and again by various projects, these on the spur of the

moment.

January, 1948 came along and time for election of officers was at hand. The nominating committee recommended to a general meeting group, that the 1947 officers be re-elected. This recommendation was voted upon and accepted.

Shortly after the election of officers a fire which occurred on Remount Road convinced several members that water carrying equipment was badly needed. The Department immediately bought a 1948 Ford Truck, equipped it with a thousand gallon tank and a 500 gallon per minute pump, which is another fire engine in itself. It is felt by most persons interested in the fire extinguishing business that this type of equipment is the best available in combating fire where there is no available water.

Money was needed to pay expenses incurred in obtaining and equipping the above mentioned truck, and the steering committee decided upon a Bar-b-cue to be held February 7, 1948, at the Fire Station. This event was a success as was the benefit show held some 15 months before.

The foregoing history as related sounds as if ideas were thought of, and bang! They were completed. Such is not the case. Much hard work has gone into the Wilkinson Boulevard Volunteer Fire Department, Inc., and the organization is greatly indebted to a few individuals in the department who have so graciously given so much of their time. Also our thanks go out to the businesses in the community which have helped so faithfully.

The following Business Concerns are firm believers in the Wilkinson Blv'd. Community and supporters of the Wilkinson Blv'd. Volunteer Fire Dept. Each has plenty of parking space allowing you to shop at your leisure.

BARBECUE LODGE

For Good Food That Satisfies

Chicken - Steaks - Pit Barbecue

Phone 9580

Curb Service

Wilkinson Boulevard

FACTORY OUTLET

Owned and Operated by J. W. Odom & Son

Featuring Pottery, China and Enamelware

Assorted Novelty Goods

3315 Wilkinson Blv'd.

Phone 4-9664

PARK-N-SHOP

Meats and Groceries

Open 10 P. M. Daily and Sundays

Phone 4-0103

Self Service

2938 Wilkinson Boulevard

WEST SIDE USED AUTO PARTS

New and Used Auto and Truck Parts

*We Buy Burned and Wrecked Cars
and Trucks*

2831 Wilkinson Blv'd.

Phone 7147

JENKINS MANUFACTURING COMPANY

General Mill Work

Screen Doors A Specialty

Phone 2-2029

Wilkinson Boulevard at Midland

H. LUCAS GROCERY CO.

Groceries, Hardware, Meats, Building Supplies
Gas and Oils

We Never Close

3000 Wilkinson Boulevard

Phone 9666

D & S ENGINEERING CO.

Distributors

Chrysler Corp. Amplex Division Oilite Bearings

2501 Wilkinson Boulevard

Phone 4-2120

WILSON'S GARAGE

Competent Mechanics — Expert Repairing

Next Door Seymore Tourist Courts

Wilkinson Boulevard

AMERICAN CYANIMID CO.

CYANIMID PRODUCTS

Wilkinson Boulevard

Phone 7721

KISER PAINT AND HARDWARE COMPANY

Paints - Household Appliance - Notions and
Electrical Supplies

A. F. Hasty, Mgr.

2408 Wilkinson Boulevard

Phone 4-8200

WILSON LEWITH MACHINERY COMPANY

Textile Machinery and Equipment
Wilkinson Boulevard Phone 4-2403

PARKER'S VETERINARY HOSPITAL

Drs. Parker, Parker & Parker
2640 Wilkinson Blv'd. Phone 4-6439

SEYMORE TOURISTS COURTS

Heated Cabins — Running Water
Night Accomodations By Personal Call
Wilkinson Boulevard Phone 2-5092

AIR PORT PARK

Farris Wheel - Merry-Go-Round - Rides of All Kinds
Call 4-5021 for Party Rates
NEW—Roll-a-Plane — Leaping Lena—NEW
Wilkinson Boulevard

DRIVE-IN-THEATRE

*Pioneering Outdoor Movies in
Mecklenburg County*
Where Parking Is No Problem
Wilkinson Boulevard Phone 2-5683

WESTSIDE LUMBER CO.

Rough and Dressed Lumber
Flooring - Sheathing - Framing - Siding
Phone 4-6959 We Deliver
2815 Wilkinson Boulevard

GENERAL DYESTUFF CORP.

Wilkinson Boulevard

TENNER BROS., INC.

Home of
HOSTESS RESERVE WINES
2711 Wilkinson Blv'd. Phone 7617

BOULEVARD GRADING CO.

Grading — Lawn and Yard Work
2-2029 Phones 2-5707
Wilkinson Boulevard

SOUTHERN ENGINEERING CO.

Structural Steel Reinforcing
Fabrication Erection
Little Pittsburg Phone 7727
Wilkinson Boulevard

LITTLEJOHN GROCERY CO.

Fancy Groceries Fresh Meats

Birds Eye Frozen Foods

Fruits

Produce

2526 Wilkinson Blv'd.

Phone 9146

WILKERSON FURNITURE CO.

Good Furniture — Agents Rulane Gas Stoves and
Hot Water Heaters, up to 20% Discount for Cash

Cash or Easy Terms

2912 Wilkinson Blv'd.

Phone 3-5552

BOULEVARD GROCERY CO.

Meats and Groceries

Your Community Store

3229 Wilkinson Blv'd.

Phone 3-9132

ODELL'S GRILL

Chicken - Steaks - Barbecue - Seafood

Air-Conditioned Curb Service

Open 5:00 P. M. Till 1:00 A. M.

3301 Wilkinson Blv'd.

Phone 4-6724

STRATFORD HOUSE

Home Of Fine Furniture

Your Patronage Appreciated

2541 Wilkinson Blv'd.

Phone 4-4245

WATER OAK GUEST HOME

MRS. EDNA HOLDER, *Hostess*

Baths, Fans, Phone Service

1 Block Famous Barbecue Lodge

3100 Wilkinson Boulevard

Phone 3-0128

PIEDMONT SALES CO.

Surplus Army Equipment

Wholesale

Retail

2537 Wilkinson Blv'd.

Phone 3-3454

E. M. STAFFORD, INC.

Used Cars of Merit

Auto Auction Each Monday and Wednesday

2615 Wilkinson Blv'd.

Phone 2-5298

ZEB GREENE USED CARS

Good Used Cars

Terms if Desired

New and Used Cars Bought and Sold

Day 6659

Phones:

Night 3-2510

2811 Wilkinson Boulevard

SHAW MOTORCYCLE & SUPPLY COMPANY

Indian Motorcycles

Whizzer Motorbikes

Sales and Service

2524 Wilkinson Blv'd.

Phone 4-7500

KISER DRUG CO.

The Complete Drug Store
Prescription Specialists

2400 Wilkinson Blv'd.

Phone 4-0819

G & W GARAGE

General Repairing and Body Work
24 HOUR SERVICE

2532 Wilkinson Blv'd.

Phone 3-4108

WEST SIDE AUTO SALES

Wholesale — Retail — Cash — Terms
Highest Prices Paid For Clean Cars

2702 Wilkinson Blv'd.

Phone 4-2857

McCOY'S SERVICE CO.

Distributors of Petroleum Products
Service Stations Throughout The Carolinas

Wilkinson Blv'd.

Phone 8606

SKY HAVEN MOTOR COURTS

A Stranger with us only once
Phone 9863

Wilkinson Boulevard at Dixie Road



Machinery For
SPINNING MILLS
Wilkinson Boulevard

A. H. GUION CO.

General Contractors

Wilkinson Blv'd.

Phone 7759

STIWALT FURNITURE CO.

Everything For the Home

Reasonable Prices Ample Parking Space

5414 Wilkinson Blv'd.

Phone 2-2708

ANDERSON'S GARAGE

General Repairing on All Makes and Models
Satisfaction Guaranteed

Wilkinson Boulevard at Remount

ACME MACHINE AND TOOL COMPANY

Machine Shop and Foundry

2610 Wilkinson Blv'd.

Phone 4-4197

DRIVE-IN-SODA SHOP

World's Best Hamburgers, Cheesburger and
Banana Split. Poplar brands Beer.

Curb Service — Plenty parking space
4109 Wilkinson Boulevard

EDWARD'S GROCERY CO.

Fresh Meats Fancy Groceries
ESSO Petroleum Products
Washing Greasing
2735 Wilkinson Blv'd. Phone 9898

MOSS TRUCKING CO.

Heavy Hauling and Rigging
Boxing for Export
2815 Wilkinson Blv'd. Phone 4-5361

WALLACE & WALLACE, INC.

And

UNITED STEEL & METAL CO.

New and Used Tires Scrap Iron & Metal
2513-15 Wilkinson Blv'd. Phone 4-3974

BAILEY'S BARBER SHOP

Open 8:00 A. M. To 8:00 P. M. Daily
3002 Wilkinson Boulevard

COOK BODY CO.

Commercial Bodies

Wilkinson Blv'd.

Phone 2-4138

THE PURE OIL COMPANY

A Quality Petroleum Product for
every Automotive, factory, home use.



Wilkinson Blv'd.

Phone 4-7223

WRIGHT'S GARAGE

For general repairing

CALL 3-7152

5409 Wilkinson Boulevard

THE FRUIT BASKET

The place to stop for

Good Ice Cream, Sandwiches, Milk Shakes.
Also Delicious FROZEN DELIGHT.

4101 Wilkinson Boulevard

CAROLINA CHINA MARKET

Wholesale — Retail

Pottery — China — Glass

Sundays 2 P. M. - 8 P. M.

Week days 9 A. M. - 8 P. M.

Wilkinson Blv'd.

Phone 4-4273