

A Short History of the Mountain Lake Fire Company

By Jack Wooldridge

As the Mountain Lake Fire Company has just celebrated its 60th anniversary (which you can read about in one of my other write-ups), I decided to write a short history of our fire company. It all started 60 years ago (obviously), with a lady named Betty Buckenmyer answering all the emergency calls from her house at Mountain Lake. Once a call came requesting help, Betty would alert the firemen by activating a group of sirens on the roof of the casino and the first firehouse. The first fireman to hear it would call Betty, and she would tell him where the fire was and then write the address on the blackboard at the firehouse. Thankfully, things have moved on since then, and this archaic system was replaced with a system that would call the firemen in their homes and leave them a message, telling them where the fire was. Betty was still answering the phones until 1980, when Liberty Township contracted with Washington Borough for dispatch services. This system was later replaced by the countywide 9-1-1 system in 1996.

For the first few meetings, the firemen were requested by the president of the fire company to bring their wives to the company meetings, and so the Ladies Auxiliary was started. They helped (and still help!) to raise money for new trucks, new equipment and later, a new firehouse.

In 1970, the fire company was accepted into the NJ State Fireman's Relief Association. In 1974, a new Ford Great Eastern "Super" Tanker was purchased, which held 1,500 gallons of water and had a 750 GPM pump. It was a welcome addition to the fire fighting apparatus at Mountain Lake. Skipping forward to 1994, our no-longer-so-little fire company got a larger response area thanks to the upcoming 9-1-1 emergency call system.

In 1995, our current four-bay firehouse was constructed and in 2002, a Four Guys Tanker replaced the old Super Tanker. In 2005, a fire safety training trailer was purchased, which helped the fire company immensely in the prevention of fires in homes. Lastly, a new fire truck has been purchased recently, which should help our fire fighters enormously. I hope you have enjoyed this look at the Mountain Lake Fire Company's history.

Sources

Mountain Lake Fire Company Website