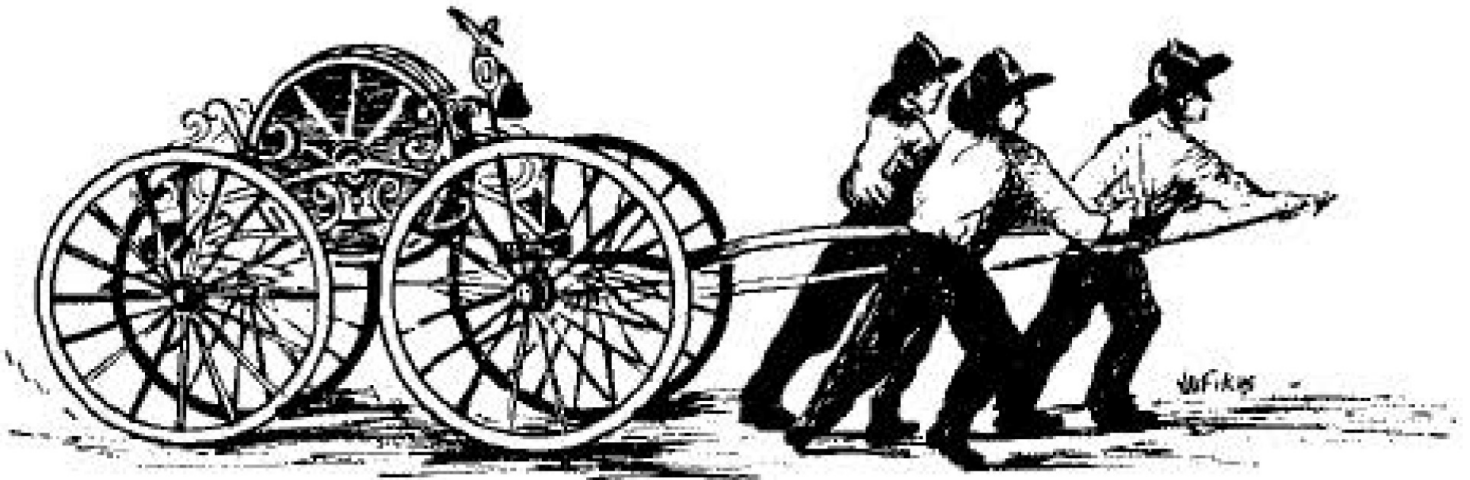


## Nutley Fire Department | Nutley Yesterday · Today - 1961



### *FIRE DEPARTMENT GROWS WITH TOWN*

ANN A. TROY

A CHARTER hanging in Fire Headquarters in the Public Safety Building in Chestnut Street marks the beginnings of Nutley's Fire Department. Dated March 5, 1894, the document bears the signatures of 30 men who organized the Yantacaw Chemical Company. A year later, April 5, 1895, the Avondale Company was formed, and on March 14, 1906, the third volunteer fire company, known as the West Nutley Company, was organized, with headquarters on High Street near Bloomfield Avenue.

The first company had the following charter members : A. H. VanRiper, P. T. Guthrie, S. V. Bassford, Charles Smith, Henry A. Connolly, Frank M. Searle, David W. Sherwood, Abram Blum, S. S. Davis, Joseph Stirratt, W. G. Kierstead, E. F. Bassford, Joseph P. Dolan, P. T. Young, L. M. Thatcher, Joseph Searle, Charles Searle, R. W. Booth, A. M. Booth, John H. White, Robert H. Drake, W. O. Davis, E. S. Humphrey, J. E. Cronham, James Wylie, E. E. Faith, Jesse Kierstead, M. J. Freeman, John Taylor and C. B. Castle.

Dr. A. Harvey VanRiper, a descendant of one of Nutley's first settlers, was the first chief, and the department's fire fighting apparatus consisted of the used hand-drawn hose cart, shown in the picture of the Avondale Company. Those in the picture were identified by Frank Perkins, Irwin Moffitt, Jacob Fitting and John Frobose, whose fathers were active in the Avondale Company. The hose cart has recently been restored and is being preserved for historical purposes.

Just as the Yantacaw Company was the first organized, so it was the first to be motorized. This occurred in 1910, and the move had a great influence on the type of motorized fire engines used throughout the country. When it was decided to motorize the company, one of the local firemen, Harry Stager, was sent to the Pope-Hartford Company, in Hartford, Conn., the only motor manufacturing company that made fire engines at that time, to tell the manufacturers what the town wanted in its fire apparatus, as up to that time

the company had built only pumpers and had not manufactured any motor fire engines. Mr. Stager's designs were so enthusiastically received by the Pope-Hartford people that the company exhibited the apparatus at the Automobile Show in New York and used it in demonstrations in several cities and towns.

The Avondale and West Nutley companies were motorized in 1924, when these companies were assigned new hose wagons and the Yantacaw Company was given a new pumper.

With a sudden growth in the town's population after World War I, moves were made to modernize the Fire Department by the appointment of paid firemen and the purchase of new apparatus. Three paid firemen were appointed in 1924 and in 1929 five more were named putting men in each of the three fire houses. In these years more apparatus was purchased also. A hook and ladder truck was bought in 1927 and in 1929 another and larger pumper was purchased. Since then other apparatus has been added. A used Ford chassis was bought in 1942 and the department added a body of its own design. The truck is used as an emergency vehicle and carries the light generator and smoke ejector, as well as salvage blankets for protection of household goods during a fire. In 1943 another pumper was bought and assigned to the Yantacaw Chemical Company and in 1946 a truck with a front mount pump and an aerial ladder was purchased from General Motors. The vehicle was designed by Andrew Hutch, then chief of the Fire Department.

During both World Wars, the department was active in all plans for civilian defense, and both volunteers and paid men are prominent in other civic activities, especially the town celebrations on July 4 and at Christmas. The department has received state recognition by the election of Chief Hutch as president of the State Exempt Firemen's Association, and the recent choice of Nutley by the State Fire Prevention authorities for a test survey of fire hazards emphasized the department's efforts to cooperate in the latest fire prevention and safety methods.

The Exempt Firemen's Association was organized May 22, 1902. Members of this organization, after seven years of service, are exempt from active fire duty. Honorary badges are presented after each seven-year period of service. The association had as its first officers the following: President, Henry A. Connolly; vice president, John E. Cornell; secretary, John H. Donaldson; treasurer, A. Harvey VanRiper. Louis Gehring, retired, with 59 years of service record. Clarence Iliffe comes a close second with 57 years of service.

Under the general supervision of Mayor Harry W. Chenoweth, the present fire department has the following officers: Chief, Harry A. Hoonan; Assistant Chiefs, Walter B. Etling, who acts as secretary; William J. Lynch of Hose Co. No. 1; Clifford Place of Hose Co. No. 2; Roy Kierstead of Yantacaw Chemical Company.

Departmental Chaplains are Reverend Arthur Roosen-Raad of Franklin

Reformed Church; Reverend Gerard Walsh of Saint Mary's Roman Catholic Church and Rabbi Hyman Danzig of Temple B'nai Israel.

The town's paid firemen are Captain Arthur Sattler, Captain Harry A. Jacques, Captain Dominic Daddio, Charles Kucinski, James Ippolito, Charles Gross, Thomas Hughes, Michael Ritacco, Thomas Wheatley, Albert Place, John Corey, William Larcombe, Donald Fraser, Louis DeLorenzo, Rolland Stanford, Leroy Rasp, John Blaney, Richard Damelio, Leslie Newport, and Frank Stegner.



Nutley Fire Department, organized 1894