

Leeds Fire Fighting History

1900 Prior to 1900 fire fighting was mostly done by water and buckets.

1909 A small amount of money was appropriated at town meeting to fight fires. The installation of a few telephones in town aided in getting help to fires.

1910-1930 Fires were fought by local men and men called in from neighboring towns. The "town reports" for these years indicate these men were paid by the hour for their services.

1930-1946 During this time, fire fighting began to have some organization. The installation of the telephone in more homes helped communication. By 1939, the town owned 59 hand fire extinguishers which were located in people's homes in different parts of town. These fire extinguishers' contents were based on water and baking soda, and people had problems storing them to prevent freezing. It became necessary to house some of the extinguishers and other equipment in a building on the "Fire Road". This is the road now called Depot Street, between Buckley's and Brackett's at Leeds Center. During this period of time, the town had Fire Wardens.

1946 - A special town meeting was held and a committee was appointed of G.G. Buckley, Robert Addison, H. A. Libby, F. A. Thomas, George Pillsbury, and George Morris to purchase fire equipment.. It was also voted that selectmen should serve with said committee.

1946 or '47 or '48

The town bought a pumping unit together with all necessary fixtures and 1500 feet of hose at a cost of \$1,464.50. At this time, all fire fighters were asked to have a trailer hitch on their vehicles so they could haul this pumping unit to the fires. During this time period, appropriations at town meeting jumped from \$100.00 to \$2,000.00 per year.

1948 - The town started paying the fire chief \$300.00 per year to get equipment to fires and pay him hourly wages when he worked.

1948 - 1st new fire truck was bought. It was a 1948 Ford and called Engine #3 (this is now number 48, and the Fire Department has plans to restore it).

1951 - Tank truck was bought

1952 - The town voted to move the fire house. It was decided at that time to move to a location on a black road and to start raising money for it.

1954 - Tank truck was bought.

1954-1955 - The new fire station was to be located north of the town garage on Rt. 106 at Leeds Center. The town continued to raise money for supplies to build the fire station.

1956 - The fire house was completed. This was a huge effort by local people spearheaded by Bill Daly.

1959 - The Fire Telephone Warning System (Red phone network) was installed. This system was used until 1993.

1967 - A new Federal fire truck was bought (Engine #1`)

1972 - Disposed of old Federal fire truck (Engine #4)

1976 - Started fund to buy another new fire truck. \$650.00 was taken from sale of old Federal fire truck and put into an equipment fund. \$750.00 was raised to put a new roof on the fire house.

1978 - Bought a 1964 Ford tank truck to replace 1961 Ford tank truck (Engine #2)

1979 - Bought a new fire truck (Engine #5) Ford chassis with FMC body.

Insulated Fire Station and Town Garage.

Started running a Beano game one night a week to raise funds for equipment. The games started at Tri-Corner Athletic Club on Rt. 106 and moved the Monmouth Fish and Game building on Rt. 202. These games continued until 1987, and in 1980 they started running a beano game at the Monmouth Fair each year.

1984 - Bought GMC (Engine #6) to replace 1964 Ford tank truck

1985 - Started raising money to buy land on dump road (now the Ridge Road) for a new fire station and town garage.

1987 - Mutual aide started

1988 - Bought Mack tank truck (#7)

1989 - Bought Army 6x6 (#6)

Put GMC out of service'

By this time, the Fire Chief's salary was \$2,500.00 yearly.

1996 - Bought new pumper Freightliner chassis (Engine #54)

1996 - 2005 Did major overhaul on trucks each year. This continues.

2001 - Bought squad truck (#51)
Did away with 1987 Ford (#1)

2002 - Bought 1996 tank truck - Freightliner (#57)
Did away with Mack tank (#7)

2003 - Bought thermal imaging camera

The fire department held its first annual Barn Sale at Bill and Louise Sanders' farm on the North Rd. This has continued through 2009 and raises thousands of dollars for the fire department each year.

2004 - Communications tower completed on Quaker Ridge.

2006 - Bought 1999 tank truck Freightliner (#56)
replaced Engine #2 and Army truck #6

2007 - Bought Kawasaki "Mule" and trailer - 4 wheeled utility vehicle.

The beano game at Monmouth Fair continued to raise money for trucks and fire equipment. A fund raising breakfast is held Spring and Fall to raise extra money. Some of the things bought from the money follows:

- personal protective equipment gear: coats, helmets, tools, gloves, air pacs self contained breathing apparatus
- thermal imaging camera
- multi-gas meter, fire hoses, folder tanks, dump valves
- GMC truck
- pagers and radios
- breathing air compressors
- storage shed
- tables and chairs
- tents
- Bunn coffee maker

Fire Wardens

1923 R.K. Lothrop
1924 Frank Knapp
1925 Frank Kanpp
1926 Frank Knapp
1927 A. E. Campbell
1928 Willis Bates
1929

1930
1931
1932
1933-1944 L.P. Safford
1945-1946 Karl Anderson

Fire Chiefs and Assistants

1946-1947 - Robert Addison
1948 - Jack Murphy
1949 - Robert Addison
1950-1951 - Bill Daly
1952 -1953 - Robert Addison
1954 - 1959 - Bill Daly
1960 - Bill Daly and Clyde Pulsifer, Jr.
1961-1969 - Bill Daly
1970 - Alfred McNear
1971 - 1975 - Gerald Hartford
1976 - 1977 - Dwight Buckley
1978 - Raymond Libby
1979 - Glenn Holt
1980 - Glen Holt, Raymond Libby
1981 - Raymond Libby
1982 -1992 - Francis Andre
1993 -1994 - Steve Page
1995-2009 - Glenn Holt

Since 2003, John Murphy and Steve Page have been assistants to the Fire Chief.

Currently, the town's fire department fleet is:

1996 pumper - Freightliner chassis - #54
Squad truck #51
1996 tank truck - Freightliner #57
1999 tank truck Freightliner #56
Kawasaki and trailer #52

This information has been gathered from town reports and interviews with Glenn Holt, Steve Page, John Murphy, Joe Murphy.

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Transcribed by Pam Bell, September 2009