

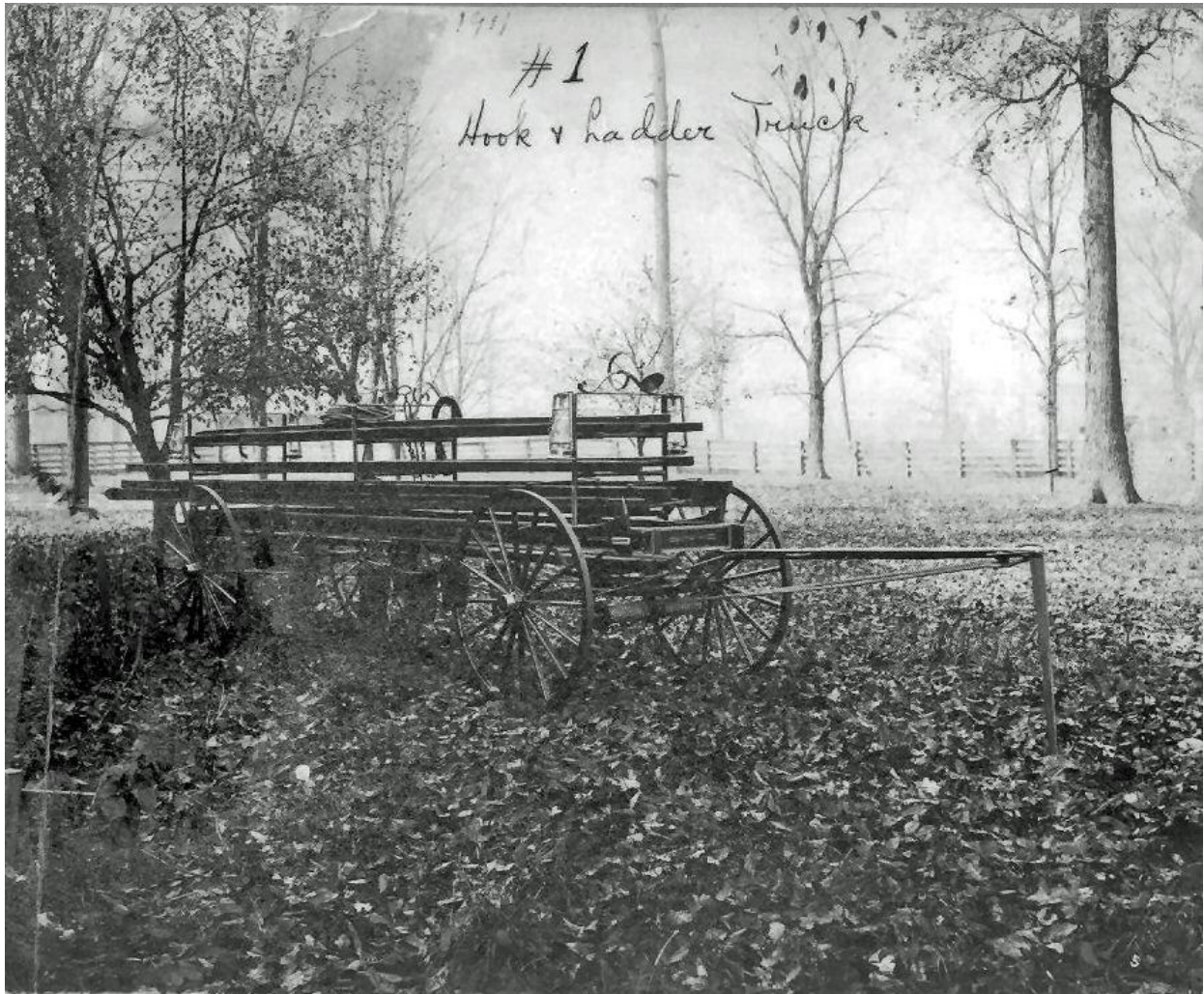
In 1911 a large fire occurred on the property of Mr. D.S. MacMullen of Midland Township. Mr. MacMullen was the local coal dealer for the two townships of Saddle River and Midland Township. Midland Township was known as Rochelle Park after the railroad station, and Saddle Brook was then called Saddle River Township. The population of the two sections was less than one thousand people. At this time there wasn't any organization to protect the local property and this fire demonstrated how ineffective an unorganized bucket brigade was.

Several men of both communities met and discussed the situation the following day. A call was sent out to the citizens to meet, and from this meeting the Fire Company was formed. It was then known as the Rochelle Park Hook & Ladder & Hose Company. They met in a large red barn owned by Mrs. Ed Schneider and located at the corner of Saddle River Road and Market Street. The original building has long since passed into history, but at this time it was the only building used by both communities for meetings, dances, picnics, church, and social events.

According to the original roll book, most of the families in the two communities were well represented. The first meeting, held April 27, 1911, was attended by fifty-six men who elected the following officers:

Mr. H.O. Wentworth	President
Mr. John Toothill	Vice President
Mr. E.H. Verrinder	Secretary
Mr. J.T. Angell	Financial Secretary
Mr. Fred Niclas	Treasurer
Mr. John Platt	Foreman (chief)
Mr. J.A. Teiderman	1st Ass't Foreman (Ass't chief)
Mr. Dan Worthman	2nd Ass't Foreman (Ass't chief)
Mr. R.E Harris	Trustee
Mr. Walter Nightingale	Trustee
Mr. Dan MacMullen	Trustee
Mr. Harry Ackerman	Trustee
Mr. H.G. Niclas	Trustee

At this meeting it was decided to incorporate. An apparatus committee was appointed and through the efforts of the committee and the generosity of the public, a hand-drawn Hook & Ladder and 24 leather buckets were bought and delivered on Election Eve in the year 1911.



The next day the firemen proudly drew their equipment on its first parade through the villages. About this time the organization was incorporated under the name of the Rochelle Park Fire Department. This was the name of the railway station that served as a common entranceway to both towns.

In 1912 the company moved to its new quarters on Saddle River Road in the red barn which still stands at 198 Saddle River Road and is now owned by the Leonhardt Family.



These were primitive and trying times for the fire department. The hand-drawn rig was changed so that it could be drawn by a horse. It was customary to pay \$2.00 for the first horse to reach the Fire House after the alarm was sounded. As there was no running water, the men only had leather buckets to work with and most of the water used was pumped by hand from the small house wells. The territory served by this Fire Department was very large; alarms were answered by both townships which encompassed the present towns of Saddle Brook, Rochelle Park, Paramus, and Fair Lawn. Many are the stories that can be told, such as the Harris fire on Market Street which happened during the day. Manpower was short and Mrs. Deleagar manned the pump and ran the well dry – so dry that it was a week before it was recovered. On another occasion the Reverend Bloodgood left the pulpit in all his finery on a Sunday morning to help at a fire on Saddle River Road.

Around 1914 the horse drawn Hook & ladder truck was again changed. It became motor drawn and the Fire House was moved to John Platt's barn. The first motor exploded in the Fire House with many parts going through the roof. Luckily, there were no serious injuries. The department acquired a Winton fire truck which served the public for many years.

After the move to John Platt's barn, an effort was made to purchase land for a permanent Fire House. A small parcel was purchased from Mr. Welcome Platt on Saddle River Road by the train tracks. After his father's death, John Platt donated the remainder of the plot to the department.

In 1920 a new fire house was built, thanks to the efforts of the members and the generosity of the citizens. This

building was dedicated on July 17, 1920 and became the center of the town's activities. The building was 30 ft. wide by 90 ft. long and it had a very good dance floor. It was built with large doors front and rear so that the truck, which had a trailer could enter from the rear as many of the men could not back this monster in safely.

In 1923 Engine Company No. 2 was organized as the Roseville Fire Company by the following men: H. DeBoer, M. Maddock, A. Sistar, M. Manzo, E. Sanford, M. Calandrillo, F. Mosco, J. B. Sistar, Joe Manzo, Angelo Manzo, J. Manzo, and F. Furtunato.



They procured a hand drawn truck and the following year, 1924, Roseville Fire Company built their first firehouse on Third Street, Saddle Brook. Until a few years ago, this building served as quarters for the Department of Public Works.



At a special meeting on April 4, 1922, the Department purchased a new Reo truck for \$1,350. One thousand dollars was borrowed from Mr. John Reiser of Saddle River Road at 6% interest. Script certificates were sold among members and friends for \$10.00 each to pay off this loan. The original ladder equipment was transferred to this Reo chassis. This truck was very fast and was used in many contests among firemen all over New Jersey, and many trophies were won. This truck was used until 1942.



In 1923, Mr. Platt donated a Hudson from which a chemical truck was made with two 30 gallon chemical tanks. This was the birth of Engine Company No. 1



In 1924 the Township built a new quarter for Engine Company No. 1 on Saddle River Road and Cambridge Avenue to serve the northern section of town which was now starting to develop.

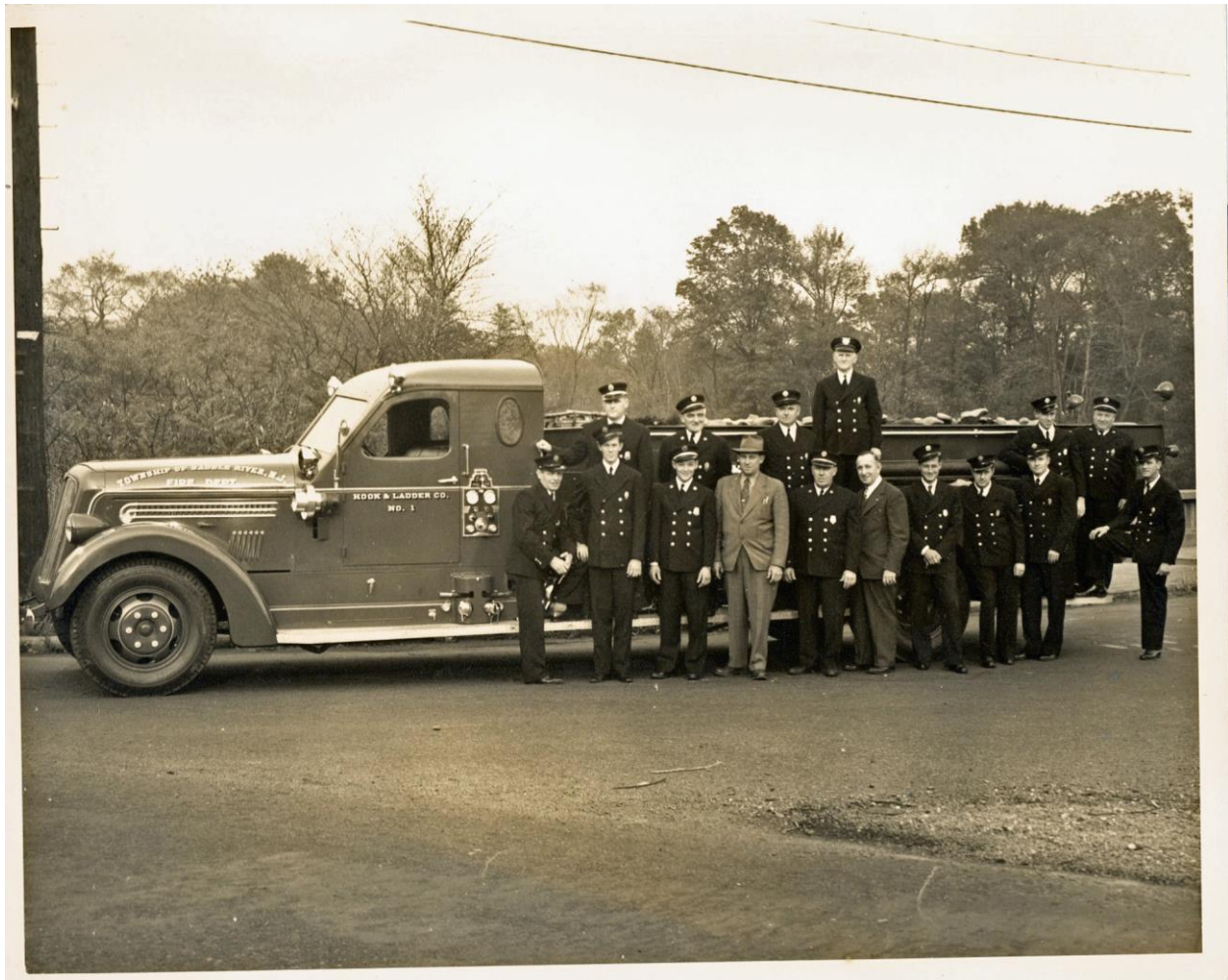
On June 12, 1924 the first siren was installed over the old firehouse on Saddle River Road. Funds for this siren were raised by the members and Women's Auxiliary.

On February 12, 1924 the present Fireman's Relief Association was formed. H. Ackerman was elected as president, John Miller, secretary and W. Gross as treasurer.

In 1925 the borough of Fair Lawn was established leaving Saddle River Township with the same boundary lines as our present Township of Saddle Brook.

In 1929 the Fire Department reorganized as the Saddle River Township Fire Department under township control.

In 1942 a new Seagrave city service ladder truck entered service at Hook and Ladder Company No. 1.



In 1946 a new firehouse was built on Market Street to house Hook & Ladder Company No. 1.



The first fire chief's car was donated in 1953. It was a two-door Ford that was no longer used by the Department of Public Works.

In November 1955, the residents voted to change the name of the town to Saddle Brook.

Two new fire pumpers were purchased in 1956 to replace outdated equipment. The Ahrens Fox fire engines were assigned to Engine Company No. 1 at the north end of town and to Engine Company No. 2 at the south end of town. The members of the department realized a need for a different type of equipment in 1958. Raffles and cake sales were run to raise funds to purchase a 1958 rescue truck which was given to the town and housed at Engine Company No. 1. A Chevy squad type of truck became Rescue 1.





During 1959 and 1960 the members of Engine Company No. 1 modernized their building using materials provided by the township committee. A beautiful new two story building was erected by the township to house Engine Company #2. This building was built next to the existing firehouse on Third Street. Upon completion, the old firehouse became headquarters for the Department of Public Works until it was condemned and razed a many years ago.

In 1961 the township fathers realized that the town was growing vertically as well as in population. An order was placed for a Pitman Snorkel that would enable firefighters to reach endangered victims to an amazing height of sixty-five feet. Saddle Brook was the first town east of the Mississippi River to possess such a vehicle. On October 14th the Department celebrated its 50th anniversary with a parade



In 1962 one of the largest fires to occur in town happened on November 8th at 439 Market Street, A three story building with three businesses was destroyed in a spectacular overnight blaze. The fire destroyed Frankie's Market and General Merchandising who occupied the building.



In 1965 an auto repair shop on Market was destroyed.

In 1966 Saddle Brooks only lumber yard was the site of an overnight blaze at the Circle Lumber Company it was completely destroyed.

Night Blaze Destroys Bergen Lumber Yard

Adjoining Saddle Brook Building Also Burned

By PETER DYARACKAS and
FRANK SEGERS
Herald-News Staff Writers

A spectacular fire roared through a two-acre lumber yard and an adjoining company in Saddle Brook early this morning, causing an estimated \$300,000 in damages and leaving tons of charred lumber in its wake.

Firemen Injured

More than 200 firemen from five municipalities fought the blaze which, fire officials said, completely destroyed the Circle Lumber Co., 530 Market St., and the Outwater Hardware Co., 516 Market St.

Four firemen from Saddle Brook and Rochelle Park suffered minor injuries during the five-hour firefighting effort and at least 30 more were treated at the scene for smoke inhalation.

Treated and released from Hackensack Hospital this morning were Firemen John Sitaro, Richard McKay and Richard Onufrak from Saddle Brook, and Walter Hammett from Rochelle Park.



Flames Silhouette Firemen Battling Lumber Yard Blaze in Saddle Brook

(Herald-News Photo by Peter J. Fortunato)

Onufrak and McKay were treated for lacerations; Sitaro and Hammett suffered punctures when they stepped on nails. Both received tetanus injections.

An unidentified pinspot from a nearby bowling alley reportedly turned in the alarm at 11:40 p.m. He said told police he could see flames from the rear entrance of the bowling alley.

Fire officials said the flames shot some 80 to 100 feet into the air at the peak of the blaze. Witnesses said they spotted the fire from as far as Paterson and Hackensack.

Police said the lumber company ignited first with flames spreading to the adjoining hardware building about 1 a.m. Both fire and police officials could give no explanation as to the cause of the fire. Immediate investigation was promised.

Large Tract

The lumber yard spreads over an estimated two-acre tract ranging back from Market Street to Sylvan Street and over to the Erie Lackawanna Railroad tracks near the East Paterson line.

Its owner, Louis Croes, 3 Floral Lane, Saddle Brook, said that "everything was burned by the time he arrived at the scene at 12:15 a.m." There is a fire sale.

A Mack fire engine was ordered in 1968 and was placed at Engine Company No. 1 firehouse. The 1956 Ahrens Fox which had been in use until this time was transferred to the Engine Company No. 2 firehouse and continued to serve the residents for many years.



In 1970 tragedy took place as the first line of duty death occurred in the department. Chief of Dept. Don Wilson, while responding to a car accident call, lost control of the fire chief car and crashed on Saddle River Rd by Jamros Terrace. This accident proved to be fatal to the chief.

Fire Chief Killed In Crash

By JANE McGUIRE
Staff Writer

SADDLE BROOK — Volunteer fire Chief William D. Wilson, trying to get to a blazing car which had plunged 30 feet off the Garden State Parkway, was fatally injured today when his own car crashed into a tree.

Wilson, 47, was trapped for 40 minutes inside the Fire Department vehicle as police and firemen used jacks and hacksaws to free him. He died at 1:05 a.m., shortly after being taken to Hackensack Hospital, officials said.

The driver of the other car, Morris Vivona, 49, of 1 Glen Drive, West Caldwell, was listed in satisfactory condition at Hackensack Hospital. A spokes-

man said several of his ribs were fractured, but that he escaped without burns.

Police said Vivona was driving along the Parkway at about 11:55 last night when his car apparently went out of control, plunging 30 feet to Saddle River Road below the elevated section of the parkway. The vehicle bounced off a cement abutment and burst into flames.

Hazardous Curve

Wilson, answering the alarm, apparently failed to negotiate a hazardous curve on Saddle River Road between Cambridge Avenue and Jamros Terrace, and his car slammed into a tree police said.

The fire chief's accident oc-

curred two blocks north of the spot where Vivona's car had plunged from the parkway. Police said the dangerous curve was the site two months ago of a fatality, and that township officials have been urging the county to realign the roadway. Gagnon, 18, of Hackensack was killed when his car struck a utility pole on Saddle River Road at Jamros Terrace. Three other youths in the car were injured.

Mayor Edward F. Kugler today ordered that all township flags be flown at half mast for 30 days. He said public employees will be given the day off for Wilson's funeral.

Wilson, whose middle name



CHIEF WILLIAM WILSON
Killed At Perilous Curve

Crash Kills Fire Chief

From Page A-1

was Donald, was known to his friends as Don. He became fire chief this year, having joined the department on June 28, 1954. He also had served as a deputy fire chief and battalion chief of Engine Co. 1.

Employed as a signalman for the Erie Lackawanna Railroad, Wilson lived at 155 Alberta Drive with his wife and daughter.

Funeral arrangements are incomplete.

An addition was placed on the Hook & Ladder firehouse, on Market Street, in 1971 and the 1956 Ahrens Fox was assigned to this company. It responded to fires until 1978 when age and hard work had taken their toll and the truck was not considered safe for use.



On September 30th a fire destroyed the Heck Beverage Company at 599 North Midland Ave.



Staff Photo by Dan Oliver

WAREHOUSE FIRE—Firemen work at the Hecks Beverage Co. in Saddle Brook, seared by a fire.

Blaze Damages Beverage Plant

SADDLE BROOK — A midnight fire caused extensive damage at the Hecks Beverage Company, a small warehouse operation at 559 North Midland Ave.

Firemen, some equipped with oxygen masks, responded to the blaze at the firm, located in a building which also contained a dance studio, private offices, and one residence.

The beverage company had been locked up for the night and firemen broke through a front window to get inside.

No one was injured. Cause of the fire was not immediately determined. No estimate of damage was available.

Police said it's likely the Board of Health will be asked to check the salvaged supplies

of soda for possible contamination.

The alarm was sounded at 11:50 last night and firemen

remained at the scene until 1:30 a.m. The building is owned by Kay Kuzicki, police said.

The township purchased a new pumper in 1972 to serve the south end of town. This Mack fire engine was capable of pumping 1250 gallons of water per minute. The new Mack was assigned to the Engine Company No. 2 firehouse on Third Street.



A bakery at the corner of second and president streets was the scene of an explosion that completely destroyed the building.

In 1973 once again firefighters were saddened by another line of duty death to strike the department. Joseph Kovolisky from Hook and Ladder Company No.1 while operating at a garbage truck fire on Mayhill Street, a fuel tank exploded and FF Kovolisky was caught in the flames and passed away from injuries sustained at the fire.

An addition was built onto the Engine Company No. 1 firehouse in 1974 to house a new Ford /Hamerly rescue truck. This truck replaced the original small truck that the fireman and their wives had purchased. This new truck became the standard for all future rescue trucks as it was equipped with some of the most modern extrication equipment available. Additional radios were purchased over the years and this truck was be used as a radio communications center at large fires or disasters.



Hook and Ladder Company No. 1 received a new Engine 3 in 1980. A Ford/ Continental pumper was delivered. It was equipped with five inch diameter hose to permit the use of large master streams of water necessary in fighting major fires.



A house fire at 376 Capitol Street was fought in the late evening hours.

1981 was busy year for firefighters. In March a fire in a book case at the Saddle Brook High School took place on March 4th. On October 5th a fire damaged three stores at 468-472 Market Street at 5th St. one of the largest fire to occur in the township took place on April 4th at 280 North Midland Ave at the De Vries Brothers Printing company destroying the business in a mid-day fire.



A new chief's car was purchased in 1981 and the 1971 vehicle that was in use was assigned to the use of the assistant chief.



A new chief's car was purchased in 1985. This allowed the town to retire the 1971 chief's car and allow him the use of the older chief's car.

A new fire engine was purchased for use by Engine Company No. 2 firefighters in 1981. This truck is also capable of pumping 1250 gallons of water per minute. This new engine placed the 1956 Ahrens Fox, Company members made the Ahrens Fox Engine 4 making a second engine in Engine Company No. 2 firehouse.



In 1982 a house was destroyed by fire in June at a Hilda Terrace residence as firefighters faced heavy fire in the living room area of a house, the fire's cause was an automatic television set that was able to turn itself on.



The 1956 Ahrens Fox at engine 2 was showing its age and in 1982 a truck committee was formed to replace the classic pumper. In 1983 a new Continental Compact pumper was delivered to Engine Company No. 2 as Engine 4. The new pumper would see fire action quickly as the Blizzard of 1983 dumped several feet of snow in February. During that storm a DPW snow plow plowing Jefferson St. discovered a fully involved warehouse at the JP Patti Roofing company.



In 1984 a large outside fire involving paper rolls struck the Enterprise Corrugated company on North Midland Ave. A photo of this blaze appeared in Firehouse Magazine, a national firefighter's magazine.



In 1985 the then twenty year old snorkel truck was replaced by a Pierce Arrow model. This truck could reach a height of seventy-five feet to rescue trapped victims or to fight fires in high-rise buildings.



A spectacular fire on Labor Day in the city of Passaic destroyed over 21 acres of commercial mill buildings and houses, Engine Company No. 2 along with Engine 3 was called on mutual aid to assist on this fire which claimed the life of a Secaucus firefighter.

On May 3, 1986 the Saddle Brook Fire Dept. celebrated its 75th anniversary with a parade and celebration.

In 1987 an order was been placed with Pierce for a new fire engine to be assigned to the Engine Company No. 1 replacing the 1968 Mack.



A fire next door to Hook and Ladders firehouse in a building that housed Gleason's Tavern took place.

In 1988 the department after years of being on the radio frequency 37.10 for dispatching moved to a new UHF radio frequency 453.650mgz for fire ground operations.

In 1989 A gas leak outside a home proved to be the cause of a house explosion at 494 Lyster Ave. on March 3rd. The blast separated the house from its foundation as arriving chiefs found the house fully involved.



Engine Company No. 2 accepted delivery of a new engine. A Mack/Ward 79 was placed into service replacing the 1972 Mack pumper that was sold to the Bergen County Fire Academy.



In 1990 a fire that damaged five apartments at Finnegan Ave. was believed to be caused by careless smoking.



An overnight house fire occurred on Leswing Ave. in a vacant house.

A kitchen fire on Hiemstrand Court caused damage.

In 1991 after issues with the UHF radio frequency a new radio frequency (453.225 MHz) was obtained for operations. Dispatching on the low band dispatch frequency (37.100 MHz) was discontinued as all radio transmissions and dispatching will be on the new UHF channel.

In 1992 an overnight fire destroyed the bleachers and pad storage room of the Saddle Brook High School football stadium.

In 1993 On New Year's morning at 6am a general alarm was sounded for a fire at the Coger Farms warehouse

on Market Street. As Chief of Dept. Buzz Henderson arrived, he had fire through the roof of the warehouse which required mutual aid from Elmwood Park to the scene. Another fire occurred this year at the Mobil gas station located on Pehle Ave which caused extensive damage on a Sunday morning.

Hook and Ladder Company No. 1 replaced their 1980 Continental engine with a new Pierce Lance pumper becoming the first piece of apparatus in town to have fully enclosed cab for the firefighters. The old Engine 3 was sold to the Independence Twp. Fire Dept. in Warren County NJ.



In 1994; Members of Engine Company No. 2 planning for the future wished to remodel the firehouse. And with many stumbling blocks the fire house was renovated making bigger apparatus bays for the newer larger fire apparatus.

An afternoon house fire at 296 Oak Ave. destroyed the kitchen of the home.

A house fire on February 25th caused damaged to the basement and upper floor of 171 Belli Terr.

June 19th saw firefighters respond to 12 Saddle River Ct. as an afternoon fire damaged a condo unit.

A fire in the Letter Craft on October 6th at 280 Midland Ave in Zuckerberg's Industrial Park destroyed the company.

In 1995; Members of Engine Company 1 welcomed their new rescue truck 1 Pierce Lance heavy rescue was placed in service replacing the 1976 Ford/ Hamerly which was transferred to the DPW.



In 1996 in the early morning hours of the winter months a working house fire occurred at a Macarthur Ave. home. A family pet was rescued.

In 1997 a fire in the house attached to Chumley's restaurant at 334 North Midland Ave. was fought in the midafternoon blaze.

Engine Company No. 2 welcomed the replacement for the 1982 Continental engine with the arrival of a new Pierce Lance engine.



In 1998 Jumbo Trading Company at 280 North Midland Ave. was the scene of a fire in the late afternoon hours.

During the winter, companies were faced with frozen hydrants during the initial stages of this fire.

A large brush fire that ran along the NJ transit tracks required mutual aid from numerous surrounding towns on March 11th.

In 1999 through the donations of the VFW three thermal imaging cameras were donated to the department.

A trading card program was developed for township kids to collect as baseball style cards were made with each member having their own card. On January 7th another warehouse fire was fought at 280 North Midland Ave.

In 2000 a fire at the Saddle Brook Mall Payless shoe store damaged the front of the building and portions of the roof.

In 2001. A short lived Dodge Durango chief's truck was placed in service.

On September 11th when the attack on the World Trade Center took place a rare never used general alarm was made, for all off duty personal and all FDNY companies were working at the attack site. At this time companies from NJ were put on standby right outside the George Washington Bridge for possible deployment to New York engine co 2 was dispatched to be a part of the task force.

2002 was a very rough year for the department as firefighters fought several fatal fires through the year. A house fire at 148 Platt Ave. on Feb 10 claimed the life of a resident as the resident was unable to escape the blaze. A mid-day house fire proved to be fatal to the lone resident on Martin Place on June 21st. A 1st Street resident suffered a fatal heart attack at a house fire.

In 2003 on March 22nd a fire at the Door Gallery Company on North Midland Ave. took place.

The members of Engine Company No. 1 welcomed a new Pierce Quantum pumper replacing the 1987 Pierce arrow pumper.

In 2004 one of the most serious accidents ever to occur in town took place on April 17th when a car traveling on Rte. 46 west lost control and crashed in front of the Metro Bagels.

Through in part of a generous donation from the VFW Squad 5 was purchased for the department.

November 14th saw firefighters battle a fire in the Paragon cleaners on Midland Ave.

Engine Company No. 2 welcomed their new Engine 4, a Pierce Lance engine replacing the 1989 Mack.

In 2005 all three firehouses were equipped with exhaust removal systems through generous donations from the VFW. The department was outfitted with brand new gear as every member was assigned a brand new set of gear making the department back in black.

In 2006 an upgrade was made to our radio system and a backup power supply was added.

A late night fire on September 18th caused damage to the front sign of the Dynasty buffet restaurant on Market Street. A mid-day house fire heavily damaged a house on Evens Place.

The early morning hours of December 10th saw firefighters fight a house fire in single digit temperatures at a house on North 7th Street.

In 2007 a late night house fire was fully involved upon arrival and destroyed a home at 174 Cambridge Ave. Another fire to strike a Market Street business took place on May 5th. Mike's Auction and two other businesses were destroyed in the late night fire.

A motorcycle shop on Midland Ave. was destroyed in an evening fire on July 8th.

A midday house fire on July 20th on Rochelle Parkway caused major damage to the home. The fire was discovered by a police officer who was doing a traffic detail. A house fire on Birk Street took place on Feb 14th Valentines evening.

In 2008 The Rescue truck command center was up graded with newer and additional radios in and a lap top computer. The Saddle Brook Fire Department was the recipient of an \$81,000+ Grant from F.E.M.A. with which the following equipment could be purchased: 45 new pagers, 2 gas chain saws, 18 SCBA air cylinders, 45 personal SCBA masks, 3 Gas-CO Detector Meters and 2 Thermal Imaging Cameras.

In 2009 a mid-day house fire damaged a living room at a Williams Street dwelling.

In 2010 a year of sadness and joy as we lost one of the cornerstones of the department as we all were stunned by the passing of ex-Chief Tommy Tylutki. A house fire on the same day as T-Bones passing occurred on Garden Street which damaged the basement of the house.

The Department softball team won the 2010 Bergen county firefighters softball league championship during the summer.

An end of an era occurred as Hook and Ladder Company No. 1 welcomed their new ladder truck, replacing the Snorkel which was their chosen apparatus from 1963! The new Pierce Velocity 95 mid mount tower ladder became the first black over red apparatus in the department.

In 2011 the year started out with one of the most serious house fire ever to occur in town took place on March 25th as a private dwelling on Adriana Blvd. was fully involved on arrival and was completely destroyed and collapsed. As several veteran firefighters were on scene called this one the "worst" house fires they have seen in many years".

For the second year in a row the department softball team won the Bergen County Firefighter's softball championship defeating the Westwood Fire Dept.

The Township of Saddle Brook is currently served by over 90 volunteer firefighters who respond in modern, well-maintained equipment. Membership is open to residents, regardless of sex, between the ages of 16 and 40. The only requirement is owning a home or having been a resident for at least three years and the completion of Basic Firefighting Courses at the Bergen County Fire and Police Training Academy in Mahwah.

Today Saddle Brook is home to three major hotels, high rise office buildings, shopping malls, manufacturing plants, commercial parks and still maintains beautiful tree lined residential streets. Three major arteries, Route 46, the Garden State Parkway and Interstate 80, intersect through our small town

On behalf of all the firefighters, we wish to thank the people of Saddle Brook for supporting us and enabling us to serve the town.