



The Dunlap Fire Department in 1955.

Dunlap Fire Department

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In 1954, Coleraine Township Trustees began making plans to form a fire department for the northern half of the township. Prior to this the northern area was covered by the Groesbeck Department assisted by neighboring departments – Fairfield, Ross and New Baltimore.

On October 18, 1954 the first officers were appointed. The Trustees appointed the officers for the first year; thereafter to be elected. Dick Bowman was chosen Chief; Gene Taylor, Asst. Chief; Ray Walters as Marshall; and George Matt to serve as Captain. Availability of fire equipment was discussed – Trustees saying that bids would have to be advertised for several weeks; and, after bids, it would take 90 days for the truck to be equipped. A committee was chosen to mail cards to the residence owners in the territory for the purpose of locating water supplies such as cisterns, wells, creeks, lakes, etc.

George Matt's old garage sign was repainted to read Dunlap Fire Department. A committee was chosen to draw up a constitution and by-laws. The department was established with the Township purchasing and owning the equipment and the membership owning the station. With this in mind, it was necessary to hold fund raising events to buy the "extra" items needed to maintain the Fire Department.

Approximately 100 people attended the first 2 meetings where it was decided how to raise money for the department. The first fund raiser was a raffling off of a rooster netting about \$450. Future fund raising events would include the carnival and yearly turkey raffle. **The Ladies Auxiliary was formed to help raise money for the department.** They worked tirelessly to provide extra equipment and furnishings for the firehouse. They went to fire scenes, in many cases, to provide water and refreshments for the working firemen.

The site chosen for the Dunlap Fire Department was at the corner of Kemper Road and Colerain. In February 1955, the department membership was set at 40 with 10 substitute firemen. In March a tower to mount a siren and hang hose was planned. A block tower was erected at a cost of \$250. Also the Township purchased a John Bean pumper.

The first 2 fire calls were received on July 17th. They were received at the station. There were 4 phones located in neighboring residences and a fifth located at the fire house. When an operator received a call for the Fire Department, all 5 phones would ring – “we guarantee an answer because someone will be at one of these residences at all times”. When it was clear as to the location of the fire, the siren would be activated by the one receiving the call merely by pressing a button next to the phone. When a minimum of 2 firemen were available, a pumper would leave for the scene of the fire. Any additional firemen who came to the firehouse, looked at the call board and responded to the fire in their personal vehicles.

The Call Board was located in the alarm room. Next to it was a filing bin which held cards with the addresses of all residents in the area. Every piece of property in the area was registered with the department. On the registration cards was information such as: the main power switch to the house, water supplies, and other information that might help or hinder the department while fighting a fire. On this card was also a map of the shortest route to the property. The cards were filed by property numbers. Smaller bins were also located by the call board and were placed alphabetically by property owner names. This system was used to check and double-check so mistakes were not made in response.

Upon arrival of the new pumper, drivers were assigned and crews were made up for each driver. Dates were set up for each driver to take his crew on practice runs. These crews were set up regarding day or night availability.

In January of 1956, it was announced that the Trustees had located and purchased a 1953 GMC cab-over, engine cab and chassis. From then until completion, the members hand built the compartments, tank, and apparatus onto the truck making it the first Dunlap water tanker. This was a 1200 gallon capacity tank.

Later in 1956, the members of the department took the Ohio State Department of Education training program, completing it in October. At this time **the Dunlap Fire Department received its Class “A” rating. This was a first for a rural Fire Department in Hamilton County;** as at the time there were only 10 Class A fire departments in the State of Ohio. This was quite an accomplishment given the short time the Fire Department had been in existence.

Each unpaid volunteer was supplied with a metal fire helmet, a rubber rain coat, and a pair of rubber boots for personal protection in fighting fires. In 1957, a two-way radio was acquired to make response to a call in the shortest time possible. In the following years, the Plectron notification devices were provided to all active members. This notification system was changed to calls to Hamilton County dispatcher and replaced the previously described phone system.

In 1962, the original one bay station was enlarged, additional space was built for a meeting room, kitchen and indoor plumbing. In 1963, a Peter Pirsch pumper on an International chassis was ordered and 2 more equipment bays were added to the east end of the firehouse.

In 1968, it was decided that Life Squad services should be provided by the Fire Department. Training was provided for interested personnel. Prior to this time, all Life Squad services were provided by the Young Funeral Home in Ross and Mt. Healthy. In 1969, a Plymouth station wagon was received, which served as a Life Squad unit. It was replaced in 1970 with a Braun unit on an International chassis.

In the early 1970's two additional drive-through bays were added to the north side of the station. A Ford FTI pumper was purchased. The original bay was converted into a meeting room. The 1962 addition was converted into offices.

The Dunlap Department and the services continued to grow as the Township expanded in population. In 1974, meetings were held with the Groesbeck Fire Department and in **January 1975 a merger between the two volunteer Fire Departments was made forming the current Colerain Township Fire Department.**

DUNLAP FIRE CHIEFS

Dick Bowman – 1954 to 1955

Gene Taylor - 1955 to 1960

Emerson "Bud" Williams - 1960 to 1975

Cloyce Snyder – *(after combining with Groesbeck)* **Colerain Chief** 1975 to 1988