

## History of Lehi Fire Department

### 1951 - Present

Lehi businessman John Broadbent starts the next fifty years as fire chief. The department was able to purchase another truck. A 1953 American LaFrance 750 gallon pumper was added to the fleet of trucks. Figure 10.



Figure 10

During the administration of Chief John Broadbent (1952-57), the department fought one of the worst fires in the city's history on August 9, 1954. An unattended brush and rubbish fire on the grounds of the forty-four-year-old Grammar School (south east corner of 200 North and 100 West) spread to the northeast corner of the building and completely gutted the vacant three-story

structure. Figure 11.

The size of the Grammar School fire prompted Chief Broadbent to seek expansion of the departments' facilities. Broadbent, and firemen Maurice "Brig" Dahl, Cloyed Penrod and Dean Kirkham met with the city council on September 13, 1954 to propose a new fire station. Members of the fire department started a fund-raising drive. Under the chairmanship of Cloyed Penrod tickets were sold by women volunteers working in all wards of the city. Each home was asked to take at least one dance ticket for a contribution



Figure 11 Lehi Grammar School

for the fire station building fund. Donations for the fire station included those from private persons and businesses alike that totaled \$2,104.68. City officials announced the following July that a 75 by 52 foot structure would be built east of the old fire station on Center Street. The \$31,795 building, designed by architect Leroy W.

Johnson, was completed in early 1956. It provided adequate housing for the brigade's three trucks including a new \$10,000 pumper. Figure 12. The old fire station was converted into a jail in 1957, and later became headquarters for the Lehi Ambulance



Department. Now the building is part of the Museum. Figure 12 Lehi Fire Station in 1954

In 1953, the fire department consisted of 21 members. Figure 13, Front row: Wayne Allred, Harold Allen, Grant Smith, Ward Glover, Knollin Haws, Afton Giles, Arthur Glover, John Broadbent, Lewis

Smith, and Alvin Broadbent. Back row

left to right: Paul

Julian, Cloyd

Penrod, Abel Ekins,

Gene Kirkham, Ned

Wilson, Valno

Peterson, Rex

Southwick, Dean



Figure 13 Members of the Lehi Fire Department 1954

Kirkham, and Maurice "Brig" Dahl. Absent was Ferd Evans and M. Duane Evans. Officers of the department were Chief John Broadbent, Afton Giles assistant chief, Ward Glover captain and Ned Wilson lieutenant. Elected Officers were Cloyed Penrod president, Dean Kirkham vice-president, Ned Wilson secretary, Directors were Wayne Allred, Ward Glover, Grant Smith and Afton Giles. Purchasing Committee: John Broadbent chairman, W.F. Evans, Cloyed Penrod, and Abel Ekins. Dance and Finance Committee: Valno Peterson chairman, Rex Southwick, Gene Kirkham, Paul Julian and Harold Allen. Fire Inspection Committee: Dean Kirkham chairman, Rex Southwick and Grant Smith. Party Committee: Grant Smith, Knollin Haws, Gene Kirkham, and Valno Peterson.

Throughout the years the department received many accolades. In 1955 members of the department reorganized the departments' Constitution and By-Laws. The department was organized with two functions in mind. The fire fighting duties would be under the direction of the Fire Chief and his Officers. Parties, dances, fund raising events and other social activities would be handled by members elected to offices and/or appointed to committees'. All members would still work hand in hand to accomplish a common goal and that was to provide the best protection they could to the citizens of Lehi. City Attorney Harvard Hinton approved them and passed them to Mr. Cy Ross of the Board of Fire Underwriters. Mr. Ross was so pleased with the arraignment that he had set up the Lehi Department as a model for other volunteer fire departments of the state to copy. The October 9, 1955 Sunday Herald claims "*Efficient Lehi Fire Department Gets Underwriter's Praise.*"

In 1955 the department pooled their money and bought the first resuscitator for use in emergencies. Department members were able to resuscitate many people over the years saving a good number of them. The Lehi Free Press had one such story when 32 year old George Perry

Price collapsed while talking to his father and his breathing stopped. *"The fire department responded in record time, and revived the man after working for approximately 20 minutes with the resuscitator."* They reported the mechanism *"worked beautifully."* Pictured in figure 14 with the new resuscitator were Dean Kirkham, Mayor



Figure 14 New Resuscitator

Harold Westring, Rex Zimmerman Councilman and Grant B. Smith.

Closing 1955, the fire department reported that they had a good year. The new station would be completed in a couple of weeks. Total contributions for the station came to \$2,372.19 some of it from the firemen's own pockets. The fire department was reorganized. Each member of the department purchased two pairs of white coveralls to protect his clothing during fires and the department had secured helmets, several pairs of boots and fire coats. They also had two air tanks and face masks to protect them from dangerous fumes.

1956 started with the grand opening to the new fire station on February 25. Figure 15.



During the year they responded to 85 calls, 80 of which were for fires, four resuscitator calls and a lost child. There were six car fires. Two had \$1,500 and \$2,000 damage. The resuscitator calls were for one drowned child,

one struck by a train, a sewer trench collapse, and a new baby at the hospital. Most of the calls were brush fires located in the city and county areas, Camp Williams, the Low Hills, Tickville, Point-of-the-Mountain and Mercur. Gene Kirkham was elected as president of the firemen's association, Abel Ekins vice-president, with Grant Smith, Rex Southwick, Ralph "Gus" Larsen and Ward Glover. Gus was hired onto the department in 1956. The new radio system was



Figure 16 Airplane crash at Camp Williams

installed in the fire trucks. The fire department ended the year responding to a plane crash at Camp Williams.

Firemen were called to the scene after the plane burst into flames as crews were attempting to extricate the pilot. It was reported that the pilot was decapitated and died instantly. Figure 16.

Lehi Fire Department obtained a new truck in 1957. Pictured were Abe Ekins and Rex Southwick on the truck and John Broadbent standing. Figure 17. They continued to respond to numerous fires during the year. This year was marred by several drowning's at the Saratoga Resort. Hay stack fires continued throughout the year and there was a reported arson fire. John W. Giddens allegedly started the fire during a domestic dispute. Several police officers were able to get the Giddens children away from the fire. The department was called and put the fire out. Mr. Giddens was charged with arson. The fire department members



Figure 17 Abe Ekins, Rex Southwick and John Broadbent

continued with new training. The Lehi Free Press reports that *23 fire men completed a first aid class. They also received classes from the "experts" from Salt Lake City Fire Department.* Topics included during training were listed as pumps,



Figure 18 Fire at Camp Williams fire department

nozzles, rescue, size-up, ventilation, and salvage. The department had 23 members. They also voted for new officers for next year (1958). Rex Southwick was president, Ken Whimpey as vice-president, Knollin Haws secretary. Directors were Ned Wilson, Harold Ellison, and Grant Smith.

The fire department started 1958 with the usual or unusual fires. In March they were called to Camp Williams to put out a fire that destroyed the Camp Williams Fire Department and all of their equipment valued at \$100,000. The cause of the fire was believed to be an overheated coal stove. Figure 18.

In 1958 Fire department members completed an advanced first aid class taught by Lee Colledge and a class on salvage and overhaul taught by Owen McEwan of the Salt Lake City Fire Department. In October the fire department announced it was looking for a "redhead" to reign as "Miss Flame" during fire prevention week. She would also preside over the fire department dance.

Winners in the Miss Flame contest were left to right: Elaine Haws (Jay Haws) Tamara

Roberts, Queen (Ray Roberts) and Mrs. Grant (Donna) Gordon daughter of Dick Evans. The Lehi Free Press reported that the "young ladies will reign over Fire Prevention Week at all activities of the fire department, as well as the



Figure 19 Miss Flame and her royalty

*Fireman's Ball.*" Figure 19. Three new members were hired onto the department. Mike Southwick, Max Ray, and Stan Gordon were welcomed aboard.

During an interview with Dean Kirkham, Dean told Russ (Innes) that "with the \$150.00 they made at the dance last year, 1958, and the city's donation they still lack about \$50 to \$60 of having enough money for the fireworks display." The Lehi Free Press made a plea for residents "to donate money so the fire department could keep up the fine tradition."

On April 8, 1959, the department responded to the Leroy Smith and J. L. Stewart Properties on 222 South 500 West. Apparently sparks from a smoldering tree stump ignited some hay in the Smith barn destroying several tons of hay along with several animals. Stewart lost part of a chicken coop filled with tools and other household goods. Everything was destroyed.

Members of the Lehi Fire Department in 1959 included front row left to right: Max Ray, Knollin Haws, Harold Ellison, Rex Southwick, Ken Whippey. Second row: Ward Glover, VaNile (Mike) Southwick, Grant Smith, Afton Giles, Lewis Smith Alvin Broadbent, Ned Wilson,

Maurice Dahl. Back row:  
Cloyed Penrod Fire Chief,  
Harold Hutchings, Harold  
Allen, Ferd Evans, Valno  
Peterson, Stan Gordon, Abe  
Ekins and Gene Kirkham.  
Absent: was Lynn Lewis.  
Figure 20.



Figure 20 Member of the Lehi Fire Department in 1959

A new decade started with the same type of fire calls. Fire destroyed out buildings at the David Holmes residence. Firemen called to Fairfield Blaze, midnight fire doused at Nuttall's caused by an electric motor. Candland, Green families escape suffocation in midnight fire. These were just a few of the headlines for the start of the year. The next call was probably the first of its kind or maybe just the first reported. The Lehi Free Press reported on August 18, 1960 that *a two-year-old Barnhart boy either fell or jumped into an outdoor privy Friday evening while playing with his pet kitten. Kevin's cries alerted his mother to his whereabouts. "There she found the small lad buried up to his armpits in the sewer muck of the eight-foot deep privy." Lehi Police officer Ray Edwards was preparing to descend into the pit when the boy responded when asked to tie the rope around his waist. "He was drawn up in that way, unhurt except for fright."* The kitten climbed up a board placed for that purpose. Unfortunately there is no picture available.

The Lehi Fire Department continued to donate their time and money to put on a spectacular fireworks display as they have for so many years. In July of 1960 the home of Wayne Allen sustained \$6,000 damage. The department arrived to put the fire out after it was discovered

by two Lehi Firemen. Grant Smith and Ned Wilson saw the fire while driving home from Camp Williams. The annual Fireman's Ball was held on October 15. Donations from the dance went to pay for next years fire works.

The fire department responded with the resuscitator to the Azar Southwick farm. Anthony Despain was killed in a tractor rollover. Efforts failed to resuscitate Mr. Despain and he was pronounced dead by Dr. Eddington who arrived at the scene.

On November 3, 1960 the J.L. Tingey home at the Point of the Mountain was destroyed by fire as reported by the Lehi Free Press. *The fire was caused by a faulty furnace according to Lehi firemen. The fire reached "inferno proportions" which included several explosions. All personal belongings were lost in the blaze.*

The fire department, as always, continued to "fire proof" Christmas trees. Citizens just made an appointment and there was no charge for the service.

New officers were elected for the new year 1961. Mike Southwick was elected president. Dean Kirkham was elected vice president, Knollin Haws secretary, Directors were Harold Ellison, Stan Gordon, Valno Peterson and Dale Walker. A hamburger fry followed for the group with the party committee in charge. In 1960 there were 21 county fire calls with a loss of \$7,750. There were twenty city calls with a loss estimated at \$6,310 and ten calls for the resuscitator.

On March 2, 1961, the city installed a new city wide radio system. The new system will aid in contacting city crews. The base station was in the fire department with the remote control in the city office. The communication system had been in use by the fire department since 1956.

The fire department responded to the John Whimpey home to administer oxygen. In May, the La Vere Downs home was damaged by fire caused by a leaky oil furnace. A hundred firemen

and volunteers assisted in controlling a fire at the Camp Williams range. The fire threatened grain fields owned by Grant Smith and Garn Holbrook. Crews responded in July to the railroad tracks between the brick plant and the Point of the Mountain to put out fires caused by



Figure 21 Trench cave in claims Lehi man

flares. Chief Penrod said they found one “fusey” in the fire. (Sounds familiar).

Firemen were called to a tragic trench cave-in. Darrell Adams died while trying to save his son Richard. Crews were laying pipe when the wall of the trench started to cave in. Richard was in the bottom of the trench working on the pipe. Darrell saw the wall start to slide and jumped in to aid his son. A large piece of asphalt hit Darrell in the back and trapped him in the trench. The Adams youth was extricated from the trench after an hour and a half of digging by members of the Lehi Fire Department and volunteers. Figure 21.

The resuscitator was used in an attempt to revive a ten-year-old drowning victim at Utah Lake during 1961 as well.

The fire department started the new year 1962 with a New Year’s dance at the Lehi National Guard Armory. All citizens were invited to bring in the new year. Proceeds were used for the yearly fireworks.

On November 11, the fire department assisted in bringing down the body of Roger Cedarstrom. Roger was killed when the truck he was driving rolled off the mountain near his lime

mine. His sister Estelle Daniels was injured.

Members of the fire department in 1962. Figure 22.

Front row left to right: Lynn "Snook" Lewis, Rex Southwick, Dale Walker, Cloyed Penrod, Chief, Boyd Wilkin, Alvin



Figure 22 Member of the Lehi Fire Department in 1962

Broadbent and Lewis Smith, Second row: Mike Southwick, Ned Wilson, Afton Giles, Duane Evans, Stan Gordon, Grant Smith, Wayne Allred. Back row: Berl Peterson, Valno Peterson, George Reynolds, Maurice "Brig" Dahl, Knollin Haws, Max Ray, Dan Kirkham, and Ferd Evans. Officers for the new year were "Brig" Dahl president, Stan Gordon vice-president with Gene Kirkham, Duane Evans, Valno Peterson and Dean Kirkham as directors. Cloyed Penrod was chief, Ned Wilson assistant chief, Knollin Haws was captain and Rex Southwick was lieutenant. There were 25 members in 1962. Duane Evans, George Reynolds and Wayne Allred rejoined the department. Absent were Harold Hutchings and Harold Ellison.

There were no major incidents in 1963. Members of the fire department responded to numerous grass fires throughout the year. Members fought a large grass fire at the Point of the Mountain. They also responded to the Francis Comer residence and doused a large fire during what was described as a fierce wind storm. Afton Giles retired in 1963 after 34 years of continuous service. Afton served as assistant fire chief



Figure 23 Afton Giles retires

and held many other offices during his career as a fireman. Figure 23.

Officers were voted in again for the new year. Lynn "Snook" Lewis was voted in as president, Valno Peterson vice-president, Knollin Haws secretary. Scott Robinson, Duane Evans, Stanley Gordon and Maurice Dahl were voted as directors. Scott Robinson standing, left rear, was a new member of the department. Figure 24.

Lehi Firemen started 1964 with a couple of house fires. At the Carl Healy residence material on a floor furnace ignited. Lee Snyder rescued a 15-month-old baby who suffered from smoke inhalation. The second fire was minor.



Figure 24 Officers for 1964

There was a fire in the new Lehi City water storage tank caused by a propane heater and a car fire on the same day. April 16, the fire department was called to the Millpond to assist in locating a drowning victim. 14-year-old Bobby Wagner drowned while swimming out to the island. He was located a short time later.

Lehi received their new fire truck. It was a 1964 Ford 1,250 g.p.m. pumper at a cost of \$27,000. Lewis Smith drove the truck from the factory located in New York. Chief Penrod stated it was the biggest truck that Lehi had bought to date and was equipped to



Figure 25 1964 Ford fire engine