

Community unites efforts to overcome

Tribute to a few good men

To the Editor:
The morning of January 10th, 1978 could have passed unnoticed as do so many days. Another day never more remembered for any one thing in particular, but for the small town of Hertford, N.C. that was not to be.

The sun was out bright and except for the cold temperature, it looked to be a very pretty winter's day, but soon parts of the sky were turned black and fear would be in the hearts of all the townspeople.

A business which supplies oil to a large part of the area surrounding Hertford was struck by disaster. Winslow Oil Company was destroyed by fire, but for the will of God and for the determination of a few good men, a large part of this historic town would now be a charred mass of rubble.

Let me make a point here before I go on. There are no paid firemen in Hertford, N.C. There are no paid firemen in the next three towns who helped aid Hertford, N.C. All the men who answered the call when the fire first started are volunteers.

Hertford's Volunteer Fire Department was the first on the scene. How many? Nineteen men. How much equipment? Three pumps. And what lay in front of them? A major oil fire.

The first three to six minutes of a fire can determine whether or not the fire spreads and covers more than what's already involved or whether it is held and not allowed to spread. These men faced what appeared to be an unsurmountable task. What took place in a very short period of time was one of the reasons Hertford is largely still intact today.

I am not trying to set apart any differences between paid firemen and volunteers. Men who fight fire are firemen whether they do it for a living or for the sake of a town.

I guess you could say this letter is a tribute to a few good men. I know that the townspeople will be paying tribute to these men for a long time to come. May I add, I am proud to have been associated with such a group.

Gentlemen, I believe that this poem must have been written with you in mind even though it was written some years ago.

A FIREMAN'S PRAYER

When I am called to duty God
Wherever flames may rage
Give me strength to save some life
Help me embrace a little child
Before it is too late
Or save an older person from
The horror of that fate.
Enable me to be alert and hear
The weakest shout
And quickly and efficiently
To put the fire out.
I want to fill my calling and
To give the best in me;
To guard my every neighbor and
Protect his property.
And if according to my fate
I am to lose my life
Please bless with your protecting hand
My children and my wife.

EARL DEANS
Firefighter
Norfolk, Va.
Local 68



RELIEF OFFERED — The United Methodist Women and the local chapter of the American Red Cross set up a relief station at the Hertford First United Methodist Church offering firemen temporary resting places as well as food and drink. Volunteers manned the station.



REPRESENTATIVE OF UNITED EFFORTS — Representative of united efforts of area fire departments are the three different fire trucks pictured above. The Albemarle Firemen's Association mutual aid agreement was put into full force locally.

"I just want to thank the firemen for showing the greatest display of courage that I have ever seen men work together and show in my life."

T. ERIE HASTE JR.
owner of home in front
of Winslow Oil Company
Local Businessman

"Everybody cooperated well — 100% everything fell right in line. And everyone was willing to pitch in and help."

JULIAN H. BROUGHTON
Perquimans County Sheriff

"They did a tremendous job. I didn't have any idea it would be possible to save anything down here."

DURWOOD REED JR.
Part Owner
Reed Oil Company

Thanks to all who helped

Thanks are extended from the community to all of the following, and any others inadvertently omitted, who offered assistance during the recent fire at Winslow Oil Company:

- Hertford Fire Department
- Winfall Fire Department
- Bethel Fire Department
- Belvidere-Chappell Hill Fire Department
- Center Hill Fire Department
- Intercounty Fire Department
- Williamston Fire Department
- Kitty Hawk Fire Department
- Tyrrell County Fire Department
- Roper Fire Department
- Edenton Fire Department
- Elizabeth City Fire Department
- Plymouth Fire Department
- Ahoskie Fire Department
- Camden Fire Department
- Weeksville Fire Department
- Murfreesboro Fire Department
- South Mills Fire Department
- Sunbury Fire Department
- Norfolk Fire Department

- Chesapeake Fire Department
- Portsmouth Fire Department
- IXL Fire Department
- Harvey Point Testing Base
- Chowan Beach
- N.C. Forestry Service
- United States Coast Guard
- Atlantic Strike Team
- Northwest Naval Radio Station
- N.C. Highway Patrol
- Perquimans County Sheriff's Department
- Chowan County Sheriff's Department
- Hertford Police Department
- Elizabeth City Police Department
- Edenton Police Department
- Perquimans County Rescue Squad
- Edenton-Chowan Rescue Squad
- Pasquotank Rescue Squad
- Salvation Army
- American Red Cross
- First United Methodist Church
- United Methodist Women
- Combined Churches of the County
- Area Merchants
- All other volunteers and individuals



ERIE — Shadows and a combination of fighting present an eerie looking scene at the fire site Wednesday morning.

Efforts are appreciated

To The Editor:

We would like to express our grateful appreciation to the firemen and many others involved in helping during Tuesday's fire. We are truly thankful for your brave and valiant efforts which saved our town. Also, we are so grateful for the miraculous preservation of our own homes which, as we watched Tuesday morning, we believed would surely be lost. We also appreciate the concern of those who offered help in repairing our homes and in giving us places to stay. We are indeed fortunate to still be living in such a sharing community.

DAVID BREWIN, MARGARET BREWIN, LAURA BREWIN, ALICE BREWIN, JIM ELROD, CHERRI ELROD.
Grubb St.
Hertford, N.C.

"It was the most remarkable firefighting job I've ever seen. I can't praise the local fire department and the surrounding departments enough. There just aren't enough words to describe the job that was done. The same goes for the local and surrounding law enforcement agencies. The cooperation I received was outstanding."

MARSHALL MERRITT
Chief
Hertford Police Department

SPECIAL SALUTE

While all firemen who offered assistance at the site of the recent Winslow Oil Company fire, we add a special salute to the members of the Hertford Volunteer Fire Department with whom the final responsibility rested:

HERTFORD VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

CHIEF CHARLES SKINNER JR.

ASSISTANT CHIEF LOYD E. "PETE" RIDDICK

COMPANY 1

Capt. Thomas Hurdle
Lt. Parker Newbern

George Fields
Wayne Henritze
Emmett Landing
Lloyd Lane
Edward Leicester
Billy Owens
Roy Perkins
W.A. Billy White

COMPANY 2

Capt. Edgar Roberson
Lt. Sid Eley

John Beers
Larry Chappell
Keith Haskett
Marvin Hunter
Donald Hurdle
Percy Newbern
Francis Nixon
Bob Reed



VOLUNTEER EFFORTS — Jean Winslow, volunteer with the Perquimans County Rescue Squad, looks out on the scene after giving a fireman oxygen for smoke inhalation. Many volunteers worked long and coordinated efforts.

To Every One Who VOLUNTEERED Their Services During The Fire On TUESDAY, JAN. 10, 1978 Especially Fire Depts. Of:

HERTFORD
WINFALL
BETHEL
BELVIDERE-CHAPEL HILL
INTER-COUNTY
CENTER HILL CROSS ROADS

EDENTON
SUNBURY
PLYMOUTH
ELIZABETH CITY
SOUTH MILLS
ROPER

GREENVILLE
WAKE FOREST
PITT COUNTY

Rescue Squads Of Perquimans-Pasquotank-Chowan

First United Methodist Church, And The Many Volunteers Who Served Through The Long And Arduous Hours — U.S. Coast Guard Strike Team — Perquimans County and Chowan Sheriffs Dept. — Hertford Police — N.C. Highway Patrol — Salvation Army — John A. Holmes High School-Edenton — Perquimans County Schools — Mercer's Grocery-Hertford — Golden Corral-Elizabeth City — Anglers Cove-Hertford & Jennette Fruit and Produce-Elizabeth City.

We Are Proud To Be Part Of A Community In Which Each One Helps His Fellow Man In Time Of Need, And We Sincerely

"THANK YOU"

WINSLOW OIL COMPANY