

Prior to the founding of the Haddonfield Ambulance Association

1920s

Up through **1926**, the Borough of Haddonfield did not have an emergency ambulance service. Two local Haddonfield funeral homes (Arthur H. Holl Funeral Home, 125 West Kings Highway and James Stretch, 8 West Kings Highway) provided “Private Ambulance Service”, but this service was primarily a non-emergency transport service. Occasionally these funeral home ambulances would transport an “emergency case” from a private home; particularly if requested by a physician making a house call at the specific residence. However, this service was not expedient and it would take some time for the specifically requested ambulance to arrive at the patient’s home.

By **1926** the borough residents recognized that a “professional” ambulance service was needed in town – one which could be readily available for patients needing emergency transportation to a hospital. In the same year, an ambulance was donated to the *Loving Service* in Haddonfield. The ambulance was believed to be an approximately **1925** or **1926** Dodge ambulance. The *Loving Service* was formed in **1903** beginning as a home-visiting service for the ill, without providing medical care – through the **1920s** as a visiting nurse service (*Haddonfield Visiting Nurses Association*), with a focus on invalids and newborn infants. This ambulance was donated by Mrs. Henry D. Sherrerd, the wife of an attorney, who lived on Chews Landing Road. The *Loving Service* operated the ambulance service with volunteer nurses and a “paid chauffeur”.

Funding to pay the “*Loving Service*” ambulance “chauffeur” became increasingly difficult and in approximately **1929**, the Haddonfield Police Department took this service over. The ambulance was lettered and it read, “Ambulance – Haddonfield Emergency Hospital”.

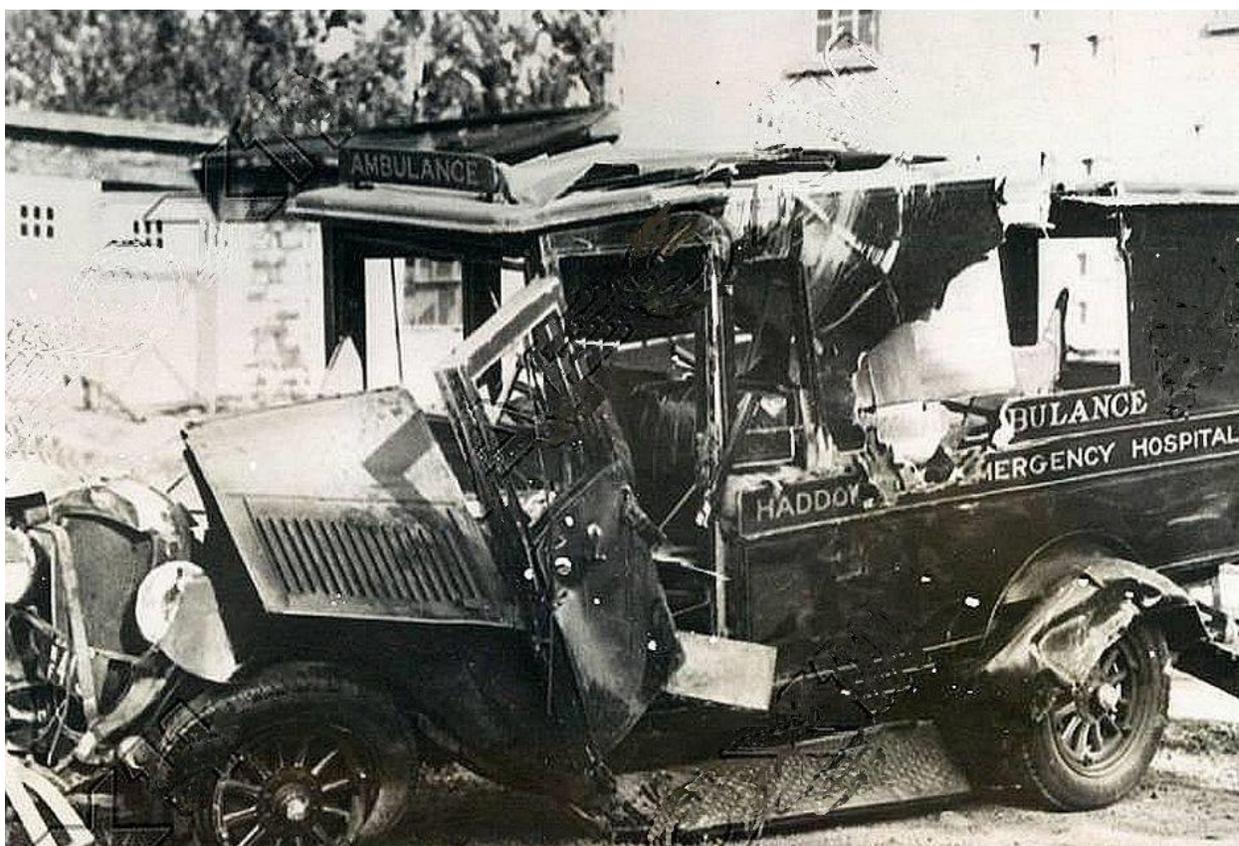
1930s

The Haddonfield Police Department, having taken over the “emergency” ambulance service, provided one or two police officers, depending on the emergency. In **1931** Haddonfield Police Department had a force of 20 officers. During this this time period, there were no mobile/portable radios to announce an emergency. After the police dispatcher received the call from a resident using either a “Bell 50” phone number, or a “Keystone 1210 phone number (depending on your telephone service provider), the police dispatcher at (Borough Hall) would then ring the call boxes located on Kings Highway in the business district whereby the “Beat Officer” would see the flashing light atop the call box and/or hear the phone ringing. Upon answering, they would be advised of the request for the ambulance and then they would typically run back to the Borough Hall, get into the ambulance, and proceed to the emergency.

1930s (continued)

On Tuesday, June 7, **1932** the ambulance was dispatched to 17 West Summit Avenue in Haddonfield. A 3 year old girl had fallen from her crib and received a cut on her head.

Accompanying the girl in the ambulance was her 36 year old father (a local printer in town). Driving the ambulance was Officer John Knorr, age 30, and another police officer, Frank Tucker, age 26 rode with the patient and her father. As the ambulance traveled down Haddon Avenue toward Camden, and as it approached the intersection (stop sign) at Rt. 130 (Crescent Boulevard) in Collingswood, it entered the intersection at a reported high speed (according to witnesses) and struck the side of an automobile traveling on Rt. 130. 6 people were killed in the accident including the Haddonfield Police Officer/ ambulance driver, the patient, her father, and 3 others in the vehicle which was struck – a 19 year old male driver, his mother, and his aunt.



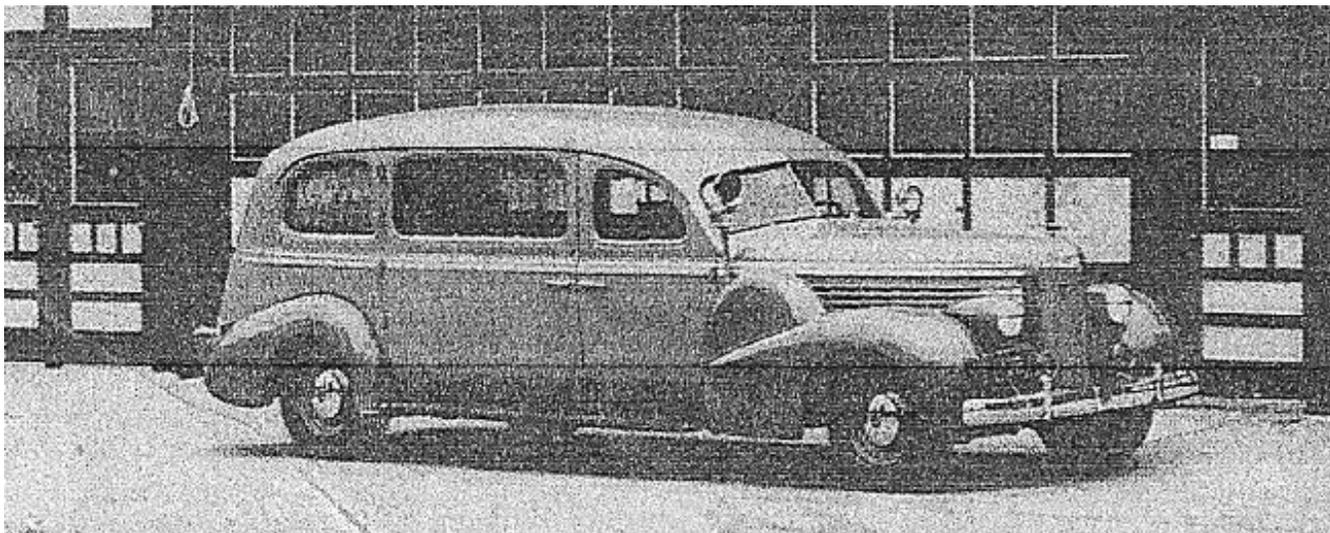
1932 - Haddonfield Ambulance – Operated by the Haddonfield Police Dept.

Following the ambulance crash tragedy, the Haddonfield community, and Police Department were quite stunned, and no entity or organization in town were willing to resume an ambulance service for the better part of the **1930s**. From **1932** through **1938**, Haddonfield had no ambulance service. Emergency transports of injured or ill persons were made either by a Haddonfield Police car or Audubon Ambulance; at the time there were no ambulances in any other adjoining towns, other than Audubon).

The founding of the Haddonfield Ambulance Association

In **1938**, Mayor G. Barrett Glover, who was also American Legion Post 38 Commander, appointed a committee of three Legionnaires, including Hermann F. Janssen, “to make an exhaustive study of other towns” ways and means of providing ambulance service. Haddon Fire Company #1, being an “emergency service” community provider for over 150 years and the Haddonfield American Legion Post 38, a community service organization, through a joint effort founded the *Haddonfield Ambulance Association*. Members of the Haddonfield American Legion Post #38 and members of *Haddon Fire Company #1* canvassed all of the borough homes to collect contributions for a community ambulance. Each contributor to the Ambulance Fund was given a receipt regardless of the amount donated and that receipt entitled them to ambulance service for the first year. Appeals for contributions were also made to civic organizations, churches, clubs, schools, and “professional men” of the community. The goal was \$5,000 which would cover the cost of the new ambulance and equipment, but also the cost of construction materials (\$600) for alternations to the firehouse to accommodate the ambulance. Members of the fire company volunteered 2,125 hours to complete the addition. By April 4, **1938**, the goal of \$5,650 had been reached, guaranteeing a community ambulance. The first four firemen who answered ambulance calls were Chief W. Makin, Rowland Holloway, Jonathan Cox, and Jarvis Dunphy. Hermann F. Janssen, of the American Legion Post 38, as per his work with this project, was named founder.

The first purchased ambulance was a new **1938** LaSalle ambulance (LaSalle was a General Motors product, manufactured from **1927** through **1940**). The ambulance was manufactured by the Superior Coach Company in Lima, Ohio. The cost of the ambulance was \$2,848. This ambulance was operated by the volunteer and paid members of *Haddon Fire Company* through the remainder of the **1930** through **1952**. The ambulance not only responded to emergency calls but it also handled routinely scheduled patient transports to/from home to hospital. This non-emergency transport service continued well into the late **1980s**.



1938 – LaSalle/Superior Ambulance (1938 – 1952)

1940s

In the early 1940s World War II was in full swing. Money was tight and the rationing of materials and fuel were commonplace. American automobile (and ambulance) manufacturing ceased in late 1942 and didn't resume until the **1946** model year. The *Haddonfield Ambulance Association's 1938* LaSalle ambulance served the community well. It was built like a tank, was kept in good condition by the members of *Haddon Fire Company* and there was really no reason to replace the ambulance during the **1940s** – as was common with many fire departments and/or ambulance organizations throughout the U.S. during this decade. Furthermore, the post-WW II vehicles, and ambulances, were not drastically different than the pre-war models.

1950s

By the early 1950s, the economy had improved and the purchasing of automobiles and homes drastically increased. The Borough of Haddonfield was growing in population and in land use. In 1952, after 14 years of dependable service, the *Haddonfield Ambulance Association's 1938* LaSalle Ambulance was sold to the Marlton First-Aid Squad and a new, **1952** Cadillac – Superior ambulance was purchased for approximately \$7,200. This ambulance was white. The license plate was transferred from the **1938** LaSalle and read: "38 NF". The "NF" indicates, "No Fee", as in the NJ Motor Vehicle registration fee.



1952 Cadillac/Superior Ambulance (1952 – 1959)

1950s (continued)

In **1952** through **1953**, the *Haddonfield Ambulance Association* ambulance operated out of a temporary brick fire station located behind the Haddonfield Borough hall, while the new quarters for *Haddon Fire Company* was being constructed on Haddon Avenue. The *Haddon Fire Company* fire apparatus was located in this temporary station as well.

Throughout the **1950s**, the uniforms for the *Haddonfield Ambulance Association* personnel were white coveralls. This uniform continued well into the late **1970s**. The *Haddonfield Ambulance Association* not only provided ambulance service to the Borough of Haddonfield, but to surrounding communities as well, if requested, as most of these municipalities had yet to establish their own ambulance organizations. The following surrounding communities established their own ambulance service as follows: Westmont Fire Company: **1940**, Cherry Hill (Delaware Twp.) – Woodland Fire Company, No. 1: **1948**, Magnolia Ambulance Corps: **1953**, Cherry Hill (Delaware Twp.) – Ashland Ambulance: **1956**, Barrington Ambulance Association: **1957**, Lawnside Fire Co. No.1: **1958**, and Haddon Heights Ambulance Corps: **1963**, Voorhees Twp. Ambulance Corps: **1967**. Some of the first-due responses for the *Haddonfield Ambulance Association* in the early through mid **1950s** was as far as Route 73 in Voorhees Twp; quite a distance, not even considering that the only choice for destination hospitals were located in Camden.

In October **1955**, the *Haddonfield Ambulance Association*, along with *Haddon Fire Company* and multiple nearby fire companies responded what is reported to be the largest fire in the history of Haddonfield, the Methodist Church on Warwick Road. There were only a couple of minor injuries reported, however the church was a total loss.



1955 Methodist Church Fire – Warwick Road

1950s (continued)

In **1959** a decision was made to replace the 7 year old **1952** Cadillac ambulance. A request-for-bid was created and distributed, with the ambulance specifications being exactly that of another Cadillac ambulance, down to the specifics of the Engine: *“to be precision-engineered and built V-type eight cylinder overhead valve. Bore 4.0”, stroke 3-7/8”, displacement at 390 cu. in. “*

Although it was the desire of the *Haddonfield Ambulance Association* to purchase a new, **1959** Cadillac ambulance, the monetary donations for the *Haddonfield Ambulance Association*, in **1959** were below the level of previous years, thus forcing the organization to purchase a substantially less expensive, “non-traditional” type of ambulance.

In **1959** an imported English Ford – Thames model 400e ambulance was purchased from the NJ Fire Equipment Corporation in Plainfield, NJ. It was quite small, compared to the previous **1952** Cadillac ambulance, and the interior space was accordingly small as well. The vehicle was painted white with gold-leaf lettering on the front doors which read, “Haddonfield, NJ”. The license plate was transferred from the **1952** Cadillac Superior ambulance and it was the third *Haddonfield Ambulance Association* vehicle to have this same “**1938**” license plate which was finally “retired” in **1962**, after 24 years and 3 ambulances.



1959 English Ford/Thames Ambulance (1959 – 1962)

1960s

By **1960** the *Haddonfield Ambulance Association* was responding to approximately 400 calls per year. According to the late Russ Stewart, Jr. a former *Haddon Fire Company* member and *Haddonfield Ambulance Association* member, some residents of Haddonfield, particularly the elderly and/or those who benefitted from their relatively frequent use of the ambulance actually asked the ambulance personnel, “*where’s the Cadillac ambulance?*” when they realized that it had been replaced by the small white, somewhat stiff riding English Ford van ambulance. Interestingly, the donation amounts increased in the following years (**1961** and **1962**), thus enabling the *Haddonfield Ambulance Association* to purchase a **1962** Buick-Flxible ambulance for \$11,000. This ambulance was a light cream color. It was manufactured by the Flxible Company, an ambulance and hearse manufacturing company located in Loudonville, Ohio. (Note: the company also produces transit buses and was the one of the largest transit bus manufacturers in North America).

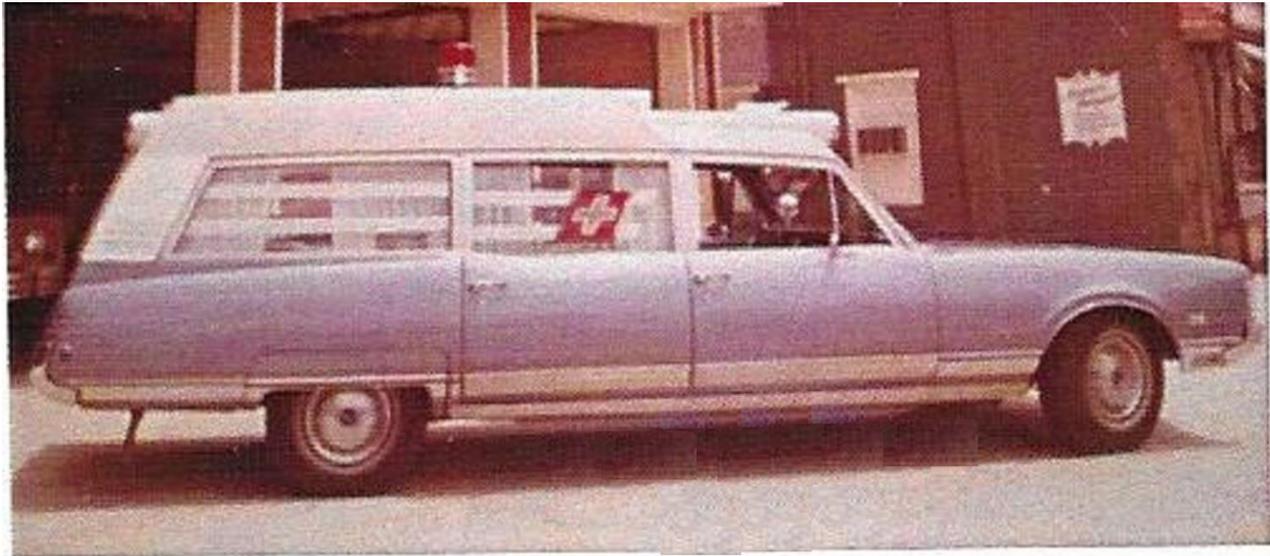


1962 Buick/Flxible Ambulance (1962 – 1968)

From September 1, **1962** through **1968**, the **1962** Buick ambulance provided coverage for the Borough of Haddonfield. In the early **1960s**, it could be seen throughout the town at emergency scenes along with the Haddonfield Police Department – Rambler (American Motors Corp.) police cars. In March **1965**, this ambulance, as well as *Haddon Fire Company*, *Barrington Ambulance Association*, and *Audubon Heavy Rescue Squad*, responded to a double-fatal accident with entrapment on Warwick Road just south of Westwood Drive. The victims were unfortunately two young people from Haddonfield – a recent graduate boy and a freshman girl who died when the **1964** Chevrolet Malibu they were traveling in struck a tree at the bend in the road.

1960s (continued)

In **1968**, after the better part of 7 years of service, the **1962** Buick ambulance was replaced by a **1968** Oldsmobile ambulance, manufactured by the Cotner-Bevington Company in Blytheville, Arkansas and cost approximately \$10,400. This ambulance deviated from the relatively plain ambulance color schemes, and was painted a light metallic blue with a white roof. It was the first ambulance in the history of the *Haddonfield Ambulance Association* to have an electronic siren.



1968 Oldsmobile/Cotner-Bevington Ambulance (1968 – 1970)

As in the **1940s** and **1950s**, the *Haddonfield Ambulance Association* was operated primarily by the members of *Haddon Fire Company* with a few supplemental non-fire company volunteers. Coverage during weekdays was almost exclusively from the Borough of Haddonfield/*Haddon Fire Company* paid fire department personnel. On a typical weekday, in the station were the full-time paid Fire Chief and two paid firemen/ambulance attendants. On evenings and weekends, the ambulance was staffed by volunteers who were typically contacted by telephone, at their homes, and they would respond to the firehouse to handle the call. On any given night, two volunteers of *Haddon Fire Company* were required to sleep at the fire station – primarily to be available to handle ambulance calls. This was a requirement for all of the 50 members of *Haddon Fire Company*.

The **1960s** decade ended with the **1968** Oldsmobile ambulance providing dedicated service to Haddonfield with over 1,000 calls. By now the annual call volume was approximately 600 responses per year. There was an effort to increase the training level of those individuals who volunteered on the ambulance and the mandated training course was the American Red Cross – Advanced First Aid course.

1970s

In **1970**, the **1968** Oldsmobile ambulance was replaced with a **1970** Oldsmobile ambulance at a cost of approximately \$13,000. The **1968** Oldsmobile was sold to the 14th Ward Ambulance Association, located in the Fairview section of the city of Camden. That organization operated a volunteer ambulance service in the City of Camden with two ambulances and was historically the recipient of the pre-owned Haddonfield ambulances. The new ambulance was also manufactured by the Cotner-Bevington Company in Blytheville, Arkansas. This ambulance was painted red with a white roof. This ambulance had more emergency lights than any previous Haddonfield Ambulance Association ambulance – with the addition of 2 flashing emergency lights on each side of the roof.



1970 Oldsmobile/Cotner-Bevington Ambulance (1970 – 1972)

Staffing for the ambulance continued throughout the **1970s** essentially as it did in the **1960s** - operated primarily by the members of *Haddon Fire Company* with a few supplemental non-fire company volunteers. In the early through mid-**1970s**, the number of non-fire company volunteers increased. These individuals included some volunteers from nearby towns, including at least two individuals from Cherry Hill Township. There were no duty-crew schedules and the calls were either handled by members who were in the firehouse when the call came in, or by volunteers who were notified by telephone by the fire dispatcher.

In April, **1972**, a mass shooting event occurred in an office building on North Kings Highway in Cherry Hill, NJ resulting in 12 people being shot, including 6 fatalities. An additional dozen or so patients were transported for conditions ranging from broken bones from jumping out of windows, to hysteria. In addition to the dispatching of 5 ambulances from the two ambulance squads in Cherry Hill, and 6 ambulances from Pennsauken, Merchantville, and Maple Shade, *Haddonfield Ambulance Association* was requested and dispatched. All of the approximately 20 patients were transported to *Cherry Hill Medical Center*. The event made national news – as it was the top story on the CBS Evening News that night.

1970s (continued)

In September **1972**, the 1970 Oldsmobile ambulance was replaced with a 1972 Oldsmobile ambulance with a cost of approximately \$ 16,000. The 1970 Oldsmobile was sold to the 14th Ward Ambulance Association, located in the Fairview section of the city of Camden. This ambulance was also manufactured by the Cotner-Bevington Company in Blytheville, Arkansas, as was the **1970** Oldsmobile ambulance. This ambulance had a 54" interior headroom (6" higher than the **1970** Oldsmobile ambulance). The last call with this ambulance was taken by Harvey Shaw and Gil Cosnett on June 26, **1975**.



1972 Oldsmobile/Cotner-Bevington Ambulance (1972 – 1975)

In the **1973** the State of New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) implemented the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) program. This was a US Department of Transportation developed "ambulance personnel" national training initiative and program. While not initially State mandated, the training program was adopted by the *Haddonfield Ambulance Association* in **1974** as the mandatory level of training for the active members. The first members of *Haddon Fire Company/Haddonfield Ambulance Association* to enroll in this course were, George Cox, Henry Bowman, William Perkins, James Makin and Frank Stewart. These gentlemen were also full-time fire department personnel for the Borough of Haddonfield. An additional member of the Haddonfield Ambulance Association, Kevin MacDonald (who soon also became a member of *Haddon Fire Company*), took the course and became an EMT as well. Two additional EMTs were certified in late **1974** – both members of *Haddon Fire Company/Haddonfield Ambulance Association*, Gil Cosnett and Harold Dorn. By **1976**, the NJDOH mandated that every ambulance

1970s (continued)

in NJ be staffed with at least one EMT. By this time, Haddonfield had 14 EMTs, with approximately 8 additional non-EMT drivers.

In March **1975**, tragedy struck the *Haddonfield Ambulance Association* at the scene of a triple fatal motor vehicle accident on West End Avenue at Kings Highway at approximately 1:00 am. Additionally 2 other individuals in the car were critically injured. *Haddonfield Ambulance Association* EMT, Galen Dixon, age 38 of Cherry Hill, died of an apparent heart attack as he and others were attempting to rescue the 5 trapped victims in the overturned 1966 Ford Mustang fastback.

In the spring of **1975**, a decision was made by the *Haddonfield Ambulance Association* to replace the **1972** Oldsmobile ambulance. A leftover **1974** Ford/Modulance was purchased by the *Haddonfield Ambulance Association* and its approximate cost was \$18,000. This ambulance was the first modular ambulance. It was white with an “American LaFrance Red” thick stripe/trim painted on the entire beltline of the cab and body. It was the first ambulance with a Federal “Twin-Sonic” light bar mounted on the cab-roof. Despite its massively increased interior space and outside compartment space, it had a relatively rough ride – particularly because it was a “truck” and it had single rear wheels.



1974 Ford/Modulance Ambulance (1975 – 1980)

In **1975** a “Datascope” heart monitor was purchased for \$1,650. *Haddonfield Ambulance Association* was the first and only ambulance squad in Camden County, and quite possibly in all of South Jersey to have an ambulance equipped with such a device. The unit was capable of printing a cardiac rhythm strip (paper) which could be provided to the hospital emergency department physician. On September 26, **1975**, Courier-Post newspaper published a story on the purchase of this cardiac monitor.



1976 - Accident on Warwick Road at Glenwood Road

In **1976** West Jersey Health System became a State of NJ Dept. of Health approved Paramedic service training center and provider. This program would train Paramedics and establish a county-wide Advanced Life Support (ALS) service to work in concert with each local Basic Life Support (BLS) transporting ambulance. *Haddonfield Ambulance Association/Haddon Fire Company* member, Gil Cosnett was the first Haddonfield resident to enter into this program and became certified as a NJ State Certified Paramedic in **1977**. Within a few years, two additional *Haddonfield Ambulance Association/Haddon Fire Company* members, Ron Richardson and Will Schaub became NJ State certified paramedics. The hospital's "Medic One" paramedic unit went into service in April **1977** and provided service to the residents of Camden County, including Haddonfield. The paramedics are only dispatched to certain calls which were reported to be serious, sometimes life-threatening emergencies, whereas the patient would benefit from pre-hospital ALS medical treatment. All transporting and BLS care of all patients would still be managed by *Haddonfield Ambulance Association*. The West Jersey paramedic service continues through today with 40 years of dedicated service to the Camden County and surrounding areas.

The **1970s** decade ended with the **1974** Ford Modulance ambulance having responded to over 4,000 calls. By now the annual call volume was approximately 800 responses per year. Throughout the 1970s the ambulance traveled a total of approximately 9,000 miles annually.

1980s

The call volume for the *Haddonfield Ambulance Association* during the **1980s** was approximately 850 calls per year.

The **1980s** began with the replacement of the 1974 Ford/Modulance ambulance. Many EMS organizations in Camden County had purchased Ford/Springfield ambulances, therefore, in **1980**, the *Haddonfield Ambulance Association* evaluated this brand and made a determination to purchase a **1980** Ford/Springfield ambulance. This vehicle was in service through **1984** when another Ford product, but different ambulance body manufacturer was chosen.

In **1982** the growing West Jersey Health System – Paramedic Program placed a full-time fourth paramedic unit, “Medic 4” at the *Haddon Fire Company #1*. This service supplemented the services of the *Haddonfield Ambulance Association* with Advanced Life Support.

In **1984** a new Ford/Braun ambulance was purchased. This ambulance was in service through **1986** at which time it was sold to *Haddon Fire Company No. 1* and retrofitted as a rescue truck. It served the fire company from **1986** through **2000**.

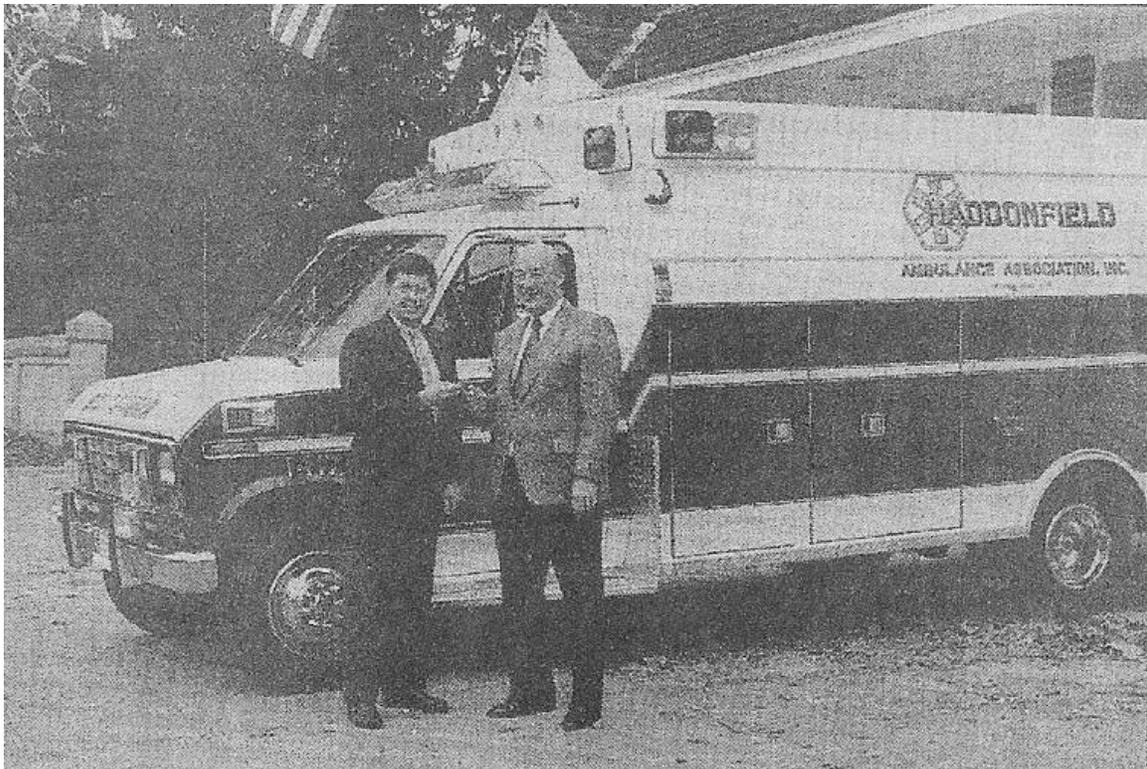


1986 – “Retired” 1984 Ford/Braun Ambulance (as Rescue Truck for Haddon Fire Company No.1)

In **1986**, a new ambulance went into service – a **1986** Ford/Braun “Long” ambulance and was in service through early **1992**. It was similar in appearance to the previous ambulance (same manufacturer) however the ambulance body on the new vehicle was lengthened somewhat.

1990s

During the **1990s**, the call volume for the *Haddonfield Ambulance Association* averaged over 900 calls. In **1992** the **1986** Ford/Braun “Long” ambulance was replaced by a **1992** Ford/Braun “Super Long” ambulance. This vehicle was again, very similar to the vehicle it replaced, yet the ambulance body was extended even further. It was one of the largest ambulances in Camden County. This ambulance was in service for 8 years – a record length of service only superseded by the 1st ambulance of the *Haddonfield Ambulance Association* – the **1938** LaSalle/Superior which was in service for 14 years.



1992 Ford/Braun “Super Long” Ambulance (1992 – 1999)

In **1999** a Ford/Lifeline ambulance was purchased. This vehicle was in service through **2004** when the Haddonfield Ambulance Association purchased an ambulance made by another manufacturer – a **2004** Ford/Horton. This vehicle was in service as the single Haddonfield Ambulance Association ambulance through **2010**, at which time it became a “back-up” ambulance. This ambulance currently serves as a secondary ambulance and is used as a replacement when the primary ambulance is out of service for maintenance/repairs, and it is also used for special events such as sporting events stand-bys, July 4th Celebration, and the annual First Night Celebration. This is the first time in the history of the Haddonfield Ambulance Association where two ambulances were the organization owned and operated two ambulances.



2004 Ford/Horton Ambulance (2004 – 2010 as first due ambulance, 2010 through current as back-up ambulance)

The primary ambulance from **2010** through current (**2016**) is a **2010** Ford/Horton ambulance. At the writing of this article, a new **2017** Ford/Horton ambulance is being ordered. This will replace the **2004** Ford/Horton ambulance, yet the **2010** Ford/Horton ambulance will be retained as a “back-up” ambulance.



2010 Ford/Horton Ambulance (2010 – current)

Details and History attributed to former member Gil Cosnett