

Incident Name: Bass River Fire

Date: 07/22/1977, between 1600 and 1800 hrs

Personnel: 4 Lives Lost

Age: Unknown

Agency/Organization: Eagleswood Volunteer Fire Department

Position: Volunteer

Summary:

Harold "Skip" Cranmer, 32, Chief

Marcus Cullen, 28, Assistant Chief

John "Reds" Baker, 52, Fireman

Herbert Blackwell, 23, Fireman

A fire started in the Bass River State Forest around 1500 hours; this was in an area of Pine Barrens and had a history of large, fast moving wildfires. Nine units had responded with the Initial Attack and had disengaged the fire at 1545 hrs. A brush truck from the Eagleswood Fire Company with four men aboard was responding to the incident after being called at 1600 hrs. It is not clear why, but this unit mistakenly proceeded into the fire area. At 1800 hrs, a reconnaissance helicopter spotted the charred truck on a narrow, dirt road.