

The Patch and Emblem We Display

At The American Township Fire Department

Upon establishing the American Township Fire Department, ATFD, in 2007 the members of the department wanted to design a patch and department emblem that represented the heritage we honor and the course the department is heading. Fire and police agencies have long been identified by their patches and emblems. In the business world today, numerous businesses and cities are now establishing an identity and calling it branding.

Many residents of American Township are unaware that it was originally named German Township until it was changed to American Township in 1918. Township citizens successfully petitioned for the name change citing Anti-German sentiment as the primary reason for the request. American Township in Allen County is also the only American Township in the State of Ohio.

To understand the ATFD patch we must look at each element of the patch. We will start with the shape of the patch. Many call it the Maltese cross when in actuality it is known as the cross of Saint Florian. Saint Florian is the Patron Saint of Fire Fighters and protects those who protect others. Like the Maltese cross, the cross of Saint Florian has eight points of courage and it also has a large curved arc between the points. The points represent: Loyalty, Piety (devotion to parents, family and church), Generosity, Bravery, Glory and honor, Contempt of death, Helpfulness towards the poor and the sick, Respect for the church. In the center of the patch is the American flag. We wear our flag proudly and for all of which it stands for. Our flag patch is oriented with the union, blue field with stars, pointing toward the front. This rule dates back to the Army's early history, when both mounted cavalry and infantry units would designate a standard bearer who carried the Colors into battle. As he charged, his forward motion caused the flag to stream back. Since the Stars and Stripes are mounted with the canton closest to the pole the stripes flew to the back. With respect to all that have given the ultimate sacrifice of life and those who have served our great Nation, the union will always be facing forward, or over our heart. The last detail on the patch is that of the bald eagle. The bald eagle was selected because it represents courage, strength, and freedom. To quote John F. Kennedy: "The Founding Fathers made an appropriate choice when they selected the bald eagle as the emblem of the nation. The fierce beauty and proud independence of this great bird aptly symbolizes the strength and freedom of America."

In closing, one will note that no matter where the Eagle is located on ATFD equipment or uniforms it is always facing forward. It is a daily reminder that we do not rest on our laurels of the past, but strive to improve ourselves making a better tomorrow for all that live and visit American Township.