

# THE BUGLE

Spring 2016

SAVING HISTORY, SAVING LIVES!

Volume 22, Number 2

## New Museum Sponsor Partnership

### Firehouse food and a dose of fire safety

By Roy P. Ziganti, Jr.

In order for a non-profit to be successful it takes the work of many and a little bit of luck. Several weeks ago the Western Reserve Fire Museum entered into an agreement with Firehouse Grilling Co., a mobile caterer from Lorain, Ohio. As a result, we are now proud to have them as sponsorship partner. They will be generously donating a percentage of their proceeds from their "street fair" activities to help support the Fire Museum.

Firehouse Grilling Co. is owned by Frank and Michelle Griffith of Lorain. Frank is currently a Lieutenant and 17 year veteran of the Lorain Fire Department. The unique nature of Firehouse Grilling is that food comes to the site and is prepared in a 1986 E-One pumper (ex Kansas City, MO Fire Department) that has been retrofitted to operate as not only a grill but also a photo booth.

Firehouse Grilling operates "street fair" style – they serve angus beef burgers, jalapeno hot dogs, grilled chicken wings, grilled potato wedges, and chicken & waffles with bacon and cheddar cheese. The Firehouse Grilling motto is community outreach to the citizens of Northeast Ohio and authentic Firehouse food cooked by real Firemen.

Firehouse Grilling Co. has been very busy during their first season setting up at events like Rockin' on the River, Ohio Bike Week and Rocking the Lot in Cleveland. ”



Photos by Joan Oliver

Converted E-One pumper as a grill

They offer catering for corporate events as well as birthday parties or just about any kind of event that you can think of and will customize a menu to suit the needs of the event. Visit their website at [www.firehousegrillingco.com](http://www.firehousegrillingco.com) for a complete list of offerings.

With that said, Frank and Michelle are also looking for individuals who can fit the role and join their team. Qualifications are a willingness to learn their "street fair" style and to talk to patrons about fire life and most importantly fire safety. If you're interested, please contact them by phone at 888-242-6117 or by email at [firehousegrillingco@gmail.com](mailto:firehousegrillingco@gmail.com).



Frank Griffith (left) and Dan Hayden (right) with the Museum logo attached to the truck

## Fire Museum Muster

The Annual WRFM/Varnes Memorial Muster will be held at the Barlow Park Farm, 1965 Terex Rd. in Hudson on Sunday, September 11, 2016. Staging of fire apparatus begins at 10am. We invite both old and new trucks privately owned or fire department owned. Parade through Hudson led by Hudson apparatus followed by pumping at the park after the parade for those who would like to do so. Usually the motorized apparatus are joined by a hand drawn, hand-pumped engine or two. (Continued on page 2, see Muster)

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This newsletter is dedicated to informing the members of the Western Reserve Fire Museum and Education Center of its activities and events.

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## Muster

(Continued from page 1)

The free event runs from 10am to about 2pm. A pot luck lunch at 11:30am with burgers/hot dogs/soft drinks provided by the Museum. Just before lunch a short memorial is held to recognize fire fighters in the State of Ohio who died in the line of duty his year along with a short Museum program. Parker Browne again is the chief organizer with assistance from Hudson Fire Chief Jerry Varnes and many members of the Hudson Fire Department. It is a great time to meet old friends and look at some interesting rigs. Plan to attend.

By Paul Nelson

## Safety Day at the Zoo



The Fire Museum once again took part in the Greater Cleveland Safety Council's Safety Day at the Zoo. It was their 31st annual event offering a variety of safety related activities for kids. Young visitors to the Museum's spot just down from the Elephant Pavilion had the opportunity to extinguish a "fire". The elephants were just a bit out of range to hit the flames.

Held on June 22nd WRFM was represented by Jim Bell, Dan Hayden, Bob Gahr, Paul Nelson and Jeff Campbell who brought his 76 ALF (Ex Bedford Heights) pumper as the water supply. He was assisted at the "fire scene" by his children Sidney and Gavin Swanson.



Paul Nelson photos

## Memorial Paver Update

Orders received for memorial paver blocks will be installed on the Memorial Plaza this summer in July. Contact the Museum by email at [pavers@wrfmc.com](mailto:pavers@wrfmc.com) for any additional information or download forms at our website at [www.wrfmc.com](http://www.wrfmc.com) for the next installation that will take place in the fall. The pavers are 8-in. x 8-in. and a number of layout options exist to commemorate individuals, events or personal milestones. Cost of each paver block is \$200.00 for Museum members and \$250.00 for non members.

After your order is placed you will receive a proof copy of the inscription that you must approve before the actual inscription is completed. Mail material and payment by check or credit card to Western Reserve Fire Museum and Education Center, 310 Carnegie Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115-2816; Attn: Pavers.

## Motorcycle Ride...2016

By Paul Nelson

What a difference a year makes! About 40-degrees and sunshine. A perfect setting for the 12th Annual Fire Fighters Memorial Ride that raises money for assistance to children of fire fighters and emergency medical personnel killed in the line of duty in Ohio that also includes scholarships. Money raised also is used for donations to charities. And, for all those years, the Fire Museum has been a part of that day's activities. Since moving to Lerner Way adjacent to the Cleveland Fire Fighters Memorial, the Museum has been serving hamburgers, hot dogs and cold drinks to all who attend. This effort serves as a fund raiser for the Museum.

Again this year Rider Insurance sponsored the food tent. Dave's Super Market donated some of the water. When all the bills are paid and donations received, the Museum will realize about \$4,000 to be used in the various on-going projects. It's a lot of work but also a lot of fun and a chance to renew relationships.

Volunteers make it happen. For all those years Joe Mason has arranged a cadre of people to help. They grill, serve, set up and tear down and then clean-up after its all over after the bikes have left. That chaos lasts about four hours. Joe also lined up sponsors, donors and those who wanted to rent booth space to promote their products or organization. This was Joe's last year running the show. Board member Jim Bell has volunteered to take on the task of herding cats for next year's Museum involvement at The Ride. He has been a volunteer for many years and this year shadowed Joe to understand all that has to be done. Joe will be still around to help.

### SOME SCENES OF THE DAY



Photos by Bob Gahr and Dan Hayden

## Spotlight on Bedford

By Paul Nelson

This is part of our continuing history series on fire departments in Northeast Ohio. Material for this project was provided by former Bedford Fire Chief and WRFM Board Member Kenny Rybka with assistance from others at the Bedford Fire Department.

Our Lands of the Western Reserve of Connecticut were surveyed in 1797 by the Connecticut Land Company, then becoming part of Trumbull County when Ohio became a state in 1803. That survey created Range 11, Township 6 that would be settled in 1813 and incorporated as Bedford Township in 1823. Named after Bedford, NY by early settlers, population reached 475 residents by 1937. The original plat would eventually be divided into the Village and the Township, where portions would be broken off in the 1900's to form other communities.

With the population standing at 768, the Village Council on January 1, 1881 authorized the establishment of a fire department. A volunteer fire company was organized on March 24, 1881. On February 23, 1882 a group of 22 volunteers were sworn in as members of Bedford Fire Co. No. 1. The Village had authorized construction of a firehouse in 1881, a 12-ft x 18-ft structure on Woodrow Street at a cost of \$195.05.

According to early records, the Village purchased fire fighting equipment from Babcock Fire Co. No. 3 in Ravenna in 1881. Other records indicated the Bedford apparatus to be a Howe hand drawn engine accompanied by a hose cart. The first fire for the engine occurred on April 9, 1882 at a saloon and barn on Broadway Avenue in the center of the Village. Volunteers were alerted by the sounding of the bell in the steeple of the Baptist Church. Also in 1882, the Village purchased 29 fire buckets to augment fire fighting equipment.



1880's Howe hand engine and hose cart

Ten structures in the center of the Village were destroyed by fire on September 9, 1893. The blaze was no match of the single hand engine with assistance being requested from Cleveland. CFD responded at 2:00pm with two steamers and a ladder truck. Two additional structures were torn down to stop the spread of the fire.

Hydrants were installed along Broadway Avenue in 1913 and in 1914 fire fighters used a single 2½-in hydrant line to extinguish a fire in a Village church steeple. Hydrant pressure was 90psi. Bedford never had a steam fire engine or a ladder truck. In 1918 the Village purchased a motorized fire truck, a Republic hose and chemical engine (no pump). The use of chemical extinguishers as a primary fire suppression method had become very popular in small communities across the nation at that time. The first pumping engine (No. 1) for the Village was purchased in 1925 built by Ahrens-Fox of Cincinnati. It was a 750gpm Model J piston pump with 80-gal booster tank. It carried 1,000-ft of 1-in hose, 200-ft of 1-in booster hose on a reel along with a 25-ft extension ladder, a 14-ft roof ladder and an assortment of tools, nozzles and equipment. That



1925 Ahrens-Fox, 750-gpm---1940 American

style piston pumper was popular in Akron and Cleveland. The Fox is now owned by Fire Museum member Ted Elder and is running condition.



1918 Republic Hose and chemical engine

In the 1920's the Village reached an agreement with the Township to provide fire protection in the Township. A 1926 Reo tanker was purchased for the Fire Department by the Township. A 500 Series American LaFrance 500gpm pumper (No. 4) was purchased for the Department by the Township in 1940. Parts of the Township had been split off to form Walton Hills and Oakwood with the Township providing fire protection to the new communities with their pumper. The names of both communities were added to the side of the pumper. In 1915 another section of the Township had seceded to become Maple Heights.

Beginning on June 8, 1944, 14 members of the Fire Department received formal fire fighting training sponsored by the State of Ohio. It was the first formal training for the department.

A Buffalo 750gpm pumper (No. 3) was added in 1945. The first ladder truck purchased for Bedford was a 1949 Seagrave quad (No. 4). Longest ladder carried was a Bangor 50-ft extension ladder. A 1000gpm Seagrave Anniversary Series pumper (No. 6/Engine 176) was delivered on July 4, 1960, the largest capacity pumper to be acquired. A new numbering system was implemented for apparatus. In 1967 A Mack Model-C 1000gpm pumper was added (No. 3/ Engine 176).

Commencing in the early 1950's during the Cold War era, a Metropolitan Civil Defense Council was established covering both Cleveland and the County suburbs. The Federal Government made

fire apparatus available to communities under the CD program and Bedford received three units through the County. While assigned to Bedford, they were to respond in the County if an incident occurred. Apparatus included a 1953 IH trailer tanker with small pump and hose reel (No. 8), a 1953 Seagrave



in LaFrance, 500---1945 Buffalo, 750

500gpm pumper (No. 7) and a 1954 Reo/Swift Heavy "Calamity Jane" Rescue (No. 5).



Mike Novak photo collection

1950's Civil Defense Apparatus

On July 15, 1963 Lawrence Miller became the first full time fire chief and first full time paid fire fighter for the Department. He had been a member of the volunteers for 38 years and had served as their chief since 1957. A new fire station was built in 1962 on Columbus Road that replaced a structure adjacent to City Hall. It was used until 2003 when a new station was built on Center Road.

On October 1, 1963 four full time fire fighters were hired after a civil service exam was held on August 8th. Bedford installed 22 fire alarm street boxes in 1963. Box 11 at Carywood School was the first box pulled for a straw fire outside the school. The Department began providing emergency medical service in 1971 and acquired their first ambulance.

Bedford Fire Department had the distinction of purchasing the first Mack/Baker Aerialscope 75-ft telescoping aerial platform (No. 1/Ladder 171) ever built in 1970. Prior to that the Mack Aerialscopes made famous by FDNY were built by Truco. That aerial ladder was eventually sold to Clayville, NY, then to another NY department and is now owned by a private individual.



1970 Mack Aerialscope at Southgate Fire in 1980

By the early 1980's the Bedford Volunteer Fire Department was officially disbanded with full time strength standing at 22 members. The Department added paramedics to the roster in 1994 with full time strength reaching 27 members.

More recent apparatus purchases included:

- 1973 Sutphen/Ford-C (Engine 174) first lime green rig
- 1987 FMC/Spartan (Engine 172/Engine 12)
- 1992 Simon-Duplex/LTI Quint (Ladder 171/Ladder 11)  
Refurbished/repainted white/red in 2002
- 1996 Pierce Quantum (Engine 173/Engine 13)  
Repainted white/red in 2001
- 2008 E-One (Engine 12)



Byron Schultz photo

1996 Pierce Quantum and 1992 Simon Duplex/LTI and medic units in front of current station

Today Dave Nagy is Chief overseeing a Department of 29 members operating two pumpers, a quint and two ALS medic units. It serves a population of about 13,000 and covers 5.4-square miles. Space available in the article does not allow inclusion of all apparatus photos. Visit the Museum homepage [www.wrfmc.com](http://www.wrfmc.com) to see all the rigs that are also listed on the Museum facebook page.

## Cleveland Fire Station No. 36 Dedication

By Paul Nelson

On Saturday, May 14, 2016 the first new Cleveland fire station opened in 25 years (last one was Station No. 11 in 1991) was dedicated on Cleveland's east side. The ceremony was held inside on the apparatus floor due to rain. Located at 3552 E. 131st Street about three blocks from the old house at 3720 E. 131st Street, the new station occupies about one half the 2.5 acre site that previously was occupied by an elementary school. A tall hose tower is located adjacent to the apparatus bay doors.



New Station No. 36 at 3553 E. 131st Street

It is a 3-bay, 1-story drive through structure with individual sleeping rooms on one side of the apparatus bay and kitchen, offices and a meeting room on the other side. A workout room and equipment is located above the apparatus floor and accessed by stairs from the apparatus floor. The building includes 15,664 square feet of space and is a LEED certified structure meeting the environmental standards for construction and surrounding environs.

The program included speeches by a number of City officials inside and a ribbon cutting ceremony, a flag raising ceremony and an unveiling of a plaque for the Mt. Pleasant community and the fire companies. Retired fire fighter John Malone who spent his entire career at Station No. 36 assisted in raising the flag at new 36.



Invited guests for the dedication

The new firehouse replaces one built in 1922 occupied on April 12th when Engine Co. No. 36 was established. Ladder Co. No. 16 was established there on August 1, 1929. Engine Co. No. 36 became the first CFD paramedic engine company on April 7, 2008. Over the years Battalion No. 5 also was quartered there. The first pumper was a 1920 White 600gpm rotary gear pumper from reserve and the first ladder a 1913 Peerless straight chassis service ladder (no aerial) reassigned from Ladder 12.



Flag raising ceremony

Layout changed from the original drawings extending the construction time. Initial plans called for a four bay brick structure with living quarters on a second floor adjacent to the high apparatus floor. The rear of the station was to have a training tower and yard.

The station will house Engine Co. 36 (2007 Crimson/Spartan 1500/500) Ladder Co. 36 (2004 Smeal Quint 1250/350/105-ft rear mount aerial) and Battalion No. 5. Ladder Co. No. 16 became Ladder Co. No. 36 in the renumbering of ladder trucks on August 1, 1983. EMS Division Medic No. 36 will also be located at the station.



Ribbon cutting ceremony

## CFD Trivia

By Paul Nelson

### More on WWII Fire Fighter Killed in Action

The original story about the missing plaque for a member of Engine 28 killed during the war prompted Museum member Chuck Muckley to do some more digging on the story. Assisted by friend Carol Schroeder a great deal of information has been found. First the spelling of his name was incorrect. It is Frank D. Centanni. The document from IAFF, Washington, DC had the spelling with a "e" instead of an "a." Military records indicated he was buried in the American Military Cemetery in Manila, Philippines also known as Fort William McKinley. Other ancestral information on the Centanni family was also located.



Block A Row 8 Grave 17

Frank D. Centanni was born on February 23, 1916. He was appointed to the Cleveland Fire Department, residence at 3528 W. 49th Street, with occupation as a grocery store clerk. He left the Department on May 31, 1941 for military service and was killed in the invasion of Corregidor on February 17, 1945. Captain, 34th Inf., 24th Div. 1st Platoon (01286439).

The story of the missing plaque was chronicled by Dick Feagler on January 15, 1976 in his daily Cleveland Press column. The plaque was found in a CFD apparatus taken to the 49th Street yard for scrapping. How it got there is unknown. After some attempts on returning it by a yard supervisor, there was no indication of resolution. The article included a photo of the plaque. Attempts to find any more information there was unsuccessful.

Danny Hayden has also done some digging. Taking information from the obit, he tracked down a relative of Centanni and made a contact. The plaque had somehow been returned to a brother of Frank, now deceased. Frank was single. One of the relatives believed it is in a box "somewhere" perhaps at the home of several others. The search is now on the find it if possible and Danny will continue to pursuit of this lead.

The Museum is considering some options for honoring Frank Centanni who was stationed in the building while on active duty as well as others who served. Watch for further information as it develops.

## Calendar of Events.

- **Fri. - Sat., July 29 & 30, 2016** – Note corrected date. Frankenmuth, MI, GLIAFAA summer fire engine muster. Info at [www.gliafaa.com](http://www.gliafaa.com).
- **Saturday, August 6, 2016** – Kidron, OH. Kidron Volunteer Fire Dept. 90th Anniversary parade. Apparatus welcome. Info at Jim Guyer 330.876.0809.
- **SPAAMFAA Summer Convention and Muster August 10-14, 2016** – Middletown, NY, More info from John Zangerle, a SPAAMFAA Trustee, at [jpzangerle@gmail.com](mailto:jpzangerle@gmail.com).
- **Sunday, Aug. 14, 2016** – Alliance fire apparatus Pump-in and contests at Glamorgan Castle, Glamorgan and Union Aves. Events start at 9:00am. Parade (Carnation Festival) of fire apparatus at 1:00pm. Info at Joe Young, 330.823.6711 or Craig Cobb, 330.206.7564.
- **Sunday, Sep. 11, 2016** – Hudson, OH. Annual WRFM/Varnes Memorial Muster at Barlow Park Farm, 1965 Terex Rd. Staging after 10:00am. Pot luck lunch (burgers/hot dogs provided) 11:30am. Parade through Hudson after that followed by pumping at the park. Info at [brownefire@aol.com](mailto:brownefire@aol.com).
- **Saturday, October 15, 2016** – Washington Twp., OH. Stark County firefighter's parade at 9:30am. Info at [RBryant31@aol.com](mailto:RBryant31@aol.com).

### LOOKING AHEAD

- **SPAAMFAA Winter Convention** – Birmingham, AL. February 22-25, 2017
- **SPAAMFAA Summer Convention and Muster** – Watertown, NY. August 25, 2017

## A Parting Shot



Status board at Old 36  
May 10, 2016

**Western Reserve Fire Museum  
at Cleveland, Inc.**

310 Carnegie Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44115-2816

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**FIRE MUSEUM TO OPEN SOON**  
See website for details



**First ever Baker Aerialscope**

Bedford Fire Department had the first Mack/Baker Aerialscope telescoping platform ever built. Learn more about this truck and the history of the Bedford Fire Department inside this issue of the Bugle on pages 4 and 5..

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