Summer 2019

SAVING HISTORY, SAVING LIVES!

Volume 25, Number 3

Opening Ceremony for 2019 Exhibit Sound the Alarm...Suburbs Respond to the Need for Fire Protection

By Paul Nelson

The opening of the 2019 Exhibit was delayed by the installation of sprinklers in our building. Building code requires the entire structure be equipped with sprinklers to permit visitors in any areas other than the first floor exhibit areas. With workers hanging pipe it was not possible or safe to have visitors in the building.

On Sunday, June 2, 2019 our opening ceremony featured members of the communities being featured in the exhibit. Fire Chief Tony Raffin represented Fairview Park and Safety

Director Thomas Weinreich represented Parma, the two departments with apparatus on the floor. Cleveland City Councilman Michael Polensek represented the Collinwood area of Cleveland. The original Village of Collinwood, annexed by Cleveland in 1910, is part of the exhibit focusing on the tragic Collinwood School Fire and



President Jim Bell and ceremony participants

the Collinwood Fire Department. Cleveland Fire Chief Angelo Calvillo represented the City of Cleveland.

The Fire Museum programming is centered on changing exhibits rather than maintaining a static exhibit. We want visitors to return often to see what is new. This exhibit selects communities in Cuyahoga County and traces their story of developing fire protection services for their residents. We also offer a short video on each featured community and story boards on how Cuyahoga County evolved in the Lands of the Western Reserve. This exhibit will run through the end

of the year followed by two new communities, Solon and Westlake, in 2020.

When you come to the Fire Museum you will see early fire engines from each community. A 1924 American LaFrance from Fairview (Continued on page 2, see Exhibit)

President's Log

By Jim Bell

As is true with most volunteer organizations, there can be many members, hundreds or even thousands. But, often times the organization has a core group of members who do the majority of the work. The Fire Museum is no exception. We have in excess of one-thousand members, yet most of the work is performed by a relatively small group of volunteers. I give kudos to everyone who has helped make this Museum what it is today. Our renovation work has been largely completed by members from Cleveland Fire, our funeral caisson is overseen by a cadre of eight, our docent staff is four. The Executive Committee is comprised of seven members, the Board of Directors currently numbers seventeen. But, we need more help.

There are a variety of jobs within the Museum that need to be completed or are ongoing. We need more docents. The exhibit is designed to be self-guided but nothing adds to our visitor's experience like having a docent who can add information and tell stories. We need volunteers who are experienced in plastering, painting, woodworking and stone cutting. We need volunteers to take charge of our janitorial needs. We need volunteers to work the front desk, welcome our guests and handle admission fees and gift shop sales. We need volunteers to go out to local fire departments and sign up firefighters for our payroll deduction program. (Continued on page 2, see Log)

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

Published by The Western Reserve Fire Museum and Education Center, 310 Carnegie Ave., Cleveland, Ohio 44115-2816

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Exhibit

(Continued from page 1)



Village as it was known then, its first fire engine. From Parma a 1938 Ahrens-Fox pumper is on display, that community's second motorized fire engine. The Collinwood exhibit features a scale model of the school where the fire occurred, crafted out of Lego blocks and other memorabilia and stories about the tragic fire. Also on display is the Euclid Beach Kiddie Fire Truck from the 50's. Euclid Beach Park was originally part of Collinwood. There are lots of folks out there who rode in this truck as a youngster. Councilman Polensak is seen in the driver's seat in a nostalgic moment.

Fuelid Booch Poek Kiddio Fire Truck

The Fire Museum's adjacent fire safety room offers activities for both children as well as adults of all ages. The Museum offers programs for groups both in the general exhibit area as well as the fire safety area. Our Fire Safety Education Director Bob Szabo can arrange a program suited to your group's needs. Scout groups,



Councilman Michael Polensek

home-school groups, public and private school groups, adult day tour groups coming into Cleveland or just you and your family are all welcome Wednesday through Saturday from 10:00am to 4:00pm. Call us at 216.664.6312 to make arrangements for a group visit.

Log

(Continued from page 1)

In short, we need the membership of this Fire Museum to stand up and become active in the life of this organization. As the old saying goes..."Many hands make light work." Please consider joining us and becoming a hands-on member of the Fire Museum. You can contact the Museum at info@wrfmc.com or calling 216-664-6312. Thank you.

Jim Bell, President

Firefighter's Memorial Motorcycle Ride...It Rained on the Parade

By John Zangerle

After being blessed with good weather for many years, you knew it had to catch up with us. On Sunday, May 26, the annual Firefighter's Memorial Motorcycle Ride took place departing from the Cleveland Firefighter's Memorial in front of the Great Lakes Science Center. The starting time for this year's Ride was moved up one hour because of City of Cleveland requirements. This earlier start time presented a dilemma for the Fire Museum that had always sold hamburgers and hot dogs to the participants as a fundraiser. It was agreed that menu would not work at 7:30 AM so this year Jim Bell organized a committee which offered breakfast sandwiches, donuts, coffee and juice to the riders.

As usual, our members provided great support for this event and about 20 volunteers arrived bright and early to set up our pop-up tents and organize the concessions. Volunteers included Bob Gahr

who brought his very early Model T fire engine for display. Jeff Campbell and John Heiman brought the Fire Museum's ex-Shaker Heights ladder to display the flag. Unfortunately, the rains soon came and many of the riders took shelter under the cover of Browns Stadium. Needless to say, the weather impacted the number of riders who came and substantially affected our food sales. Nevertheless, the ceremonies went forward as planned and the intrepid riders who braved the weather took off to the west.

The Fire Museum is proud to have continued its support of the Firefighter's Memorial Motorcycle Ride. The very first Memorial Motorcycle Ride started from the Fire Museum location on Carnegie Avenue and the Fire Museum has participated in this worthy cause every year since. Our thanks go to Rider Insurance for again helping to underwrite our food costs.

FIRE ON THE RIVER A Special Music Concert at the Fire Museum

By Jim Bell

The Western Reserve Fire Museum invites our members and friends to attend a very special musical presentation, commemerating the 50th anniversary of the 1969 Cuyahoga River fire. In partnership with Blue Streak Ensemble, the concert will feature compositions written by Cleveland area musicians specifically for this event.

Come join us on Monday, September 23 at 7:00 pm at the Fire Museum, 310 Carnegie Ave. in downtown Cleveland. Your ticket

includes admission to the Museum, light snacks and wine (beginning at $6:00~\rm{pm}$), and a post-concert reception. A portion of the proceeds will benefit the Fire Museum.

Parking is available directly across the street from the Museum. Tickets are \$30, student price is \$15. Tickets can be purchased, and information can be found at www.BlueStreakEnsemble.com. We look forward to seeing you at this event.

When Pigs Fly...The Luau

By John Zangerle



The venue at Lago Custom Events





items. The premier item of the evening was the use of the Sherwin-Williams suite for a July Indians game complete with all tickets, food, and beverages. Other popular items included Indians club seats, several groups of Browns tickets, a night on the town including dinner and hotel in downtown Cleveland, as well

Some of the silent auction items

as food and liquor baskets. Thanks to all those who contributed baskets.

While our roasting pig did not actually fly away during our Luau fundraiser, the wind was so strong that the cooking had to be moved inside the tent because of its intensity. Despite the windy and later rainy conditions, all 230 people attending had a terrific time enjoying both good food and good company. The location was superb with a view of the lakefront and the Flats. Fortunately, we were under a very substantial tent that proved capable of dealing with the high wind warning that afternoon. Our DJ, Bob Shimits, did a fine job entertaining the crowd as did our authentic Hawaiian dancers, courtesy of Manivic's Dance Company.

Not only did we have record attendance, but we also had a record number of baskets and donations for our silent auction. The silent auction items demonstrated the creativity of our membership and many attendees happily went home with great



The Flying Pig



Bryan Draga Emcee

A special thanks goes to Museum Board member Bryan Draga and Sherwin-Williams who provided the lead auction item as well as numerous other gifts and support of this event. Perhaps one of the most important contributors was Museum Board member Andrew Czarzasty, Esq. and Lago Custom Events, who did a wonderful job of working with the committee to set up the venue and cater the food on the East Bank of the Flats. Their flexibility in meeting the very demanding weather conditions was much appreciated.

The success of this event was due to the support of a very strong committee co-chaired by Museum Board members Dan Martone and Bryan Draga, with Jim Bell, Andrew Czarzasty, Pat Poole, Joan Oliver, and John Zangerle. Pat Poole took ownership of the silent auction items and collected a great variety of items. All of this could not have happened without the very hard work of Joan Oliver who kept track of the tickets, organized and wrapped baskets with Pat Poole, prepared the program and generally oversaw the details. We thank all those who attended and look forward to next year.









Audience participation trying the dance (Above) Bob Shimits, the DJ (Left)

Frank Novak and Jim Bell selling 50-50 Raffle tickets (Right)





70 years Ago

When Engine 37 became Engine 42

By Jim Mordaunt, WRFM Member



Station No. 37 1940 photo

According to Paul Nelson, the Western Reserve Fire Museum and Education Center's Historian, Station 42 opened on June 9, 1949. What Paul may not have been aware of was that on that June date, there was a parade from old Station 37 to the new Station 42 plus a ceremony at the station to mark its opening.

I know this because I was there. I was eight years old going on nine, and like a lot of young boys, I was interested in fire engines. I grew up in the Old Brooklyn area of Cleveland that was serviced by Engine 37, a 1939 American LaFrance 500 Series pumper. It looked like a monster to me. The side view was that of a sleek design for that time with the enclosed overhead ladder rack and suction hoses hidden in the side panels. The front view was massive with a huge smiling grill and an imposing siren and light perched on the hood in front



Station No. 42 1949 photo

of a very horizontal-looking windshield.

But, back to the parade. My parents somehow heard about the parade and, because of my interest in fire engines, they decided we all should go and check it out. To the best of my memory, it took place

in the early evening, probably about 7:00pm. I do not remember if there was a marching band or just what the make-up of the parade looked like. I know the siren on Engine 37 saw plenty of action along the parade route. My parents and I, along with other folks from the community, followed the parade on the sidewalks from Station 37, along Broadview Road to Pearl Road, past the CTS "car barns" and up the hill to the new Station 42. When the parade reached Station 42, we noticed a sizable crowd had formed on the double apron. At that point there most likely were speeches by city politicians and CFD brass, but when you are eight years old you do not really pay close attention to such things.

My more distinct and lasting memory was the positioning of the U.S. flag. Along with Engine 37, a hook and ladder truck was positioned on the apron. A fire fighter climbed up the ladder, which to me looked as if it were almost vertical angle. He was

carrying an American flag, and when he reached the top, he held the flag out to the side and the ladder turntable was rotated a full 360-degtees for two or three revolutions at a pretty good speed as Old Glory unfurled in the breeze. At that point, the crowd broke into spontaneous cheers and applause. The ladder was then tilted toward the top of the flagpole and the fire fighter leaned out and fastened the flag to the rope at the top of the pole while the applause and cheers continued.



Engine Co. 37 and crew 1941 photo

Let me tell you that the applause and the cheers were not polite; rather, they were loud and meaningful and had some real spirit to them. Looking back and knowing what I know now, the spontaneous crowd reaction was likely because World War II had ended less than four years prior, and patriotism was at a high point.

For me, that scene has remained in my memory ever since. Paul Nelson has stated that there are no known photographs of the ceremony, but if there were, you might be able to spot a small boy who was checking out the fire apparatus. And, even today, at 78, I still retain a passion for fire engines and recall with an amazing degree of clarity, that parade and ceremony 70 years ago.

Ed note: The pumper (31F17) was one of two identical Model 512CC pumpers delivered to CFD in 1939. This pumper was originally Engine 28 from 1939 to 1940. It was removed from service in 1951. A spare 30's Seagrave tractor trailer aerial ladder was stored at Station 42 and was probably the truck referred to in the story.





Engine 42 inside Station No. 42 1949 photos

From the Pages of Akron Fire History

By Paul Nelson

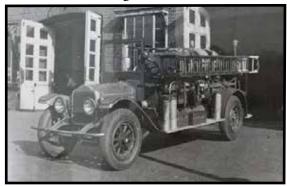
Motorized Steamers



1901 LaFrance steamer with Christy tractor

Akron like Cleveland turned to the use of motorized tractors to extend the life of horse drawn steam fire engines. In 1913 AFD acquired two Christy/Front Wheel Drive Co. 2-wheel tractors to place under Engine 1 and Engine 5. Engine 1 was a 2d class 1901 LaFrance Metropolitan 800gpm double piston engine and Engine 5 was a 3d class 1903 Maning 600gpm double piston engine. Both steamers had been running with motorized Webb/Thomas hose wagon/chemicals since 1908. The steamers continued in service into 1924 later running with 1913 Nott/Thomas hose wagon/chemical engines and 1921 and 1922 White hose wagon/chemical engines. Engine 1 and 5 received 1924 750gpm Ahrens-Fox pumpers in 1924 to replace the steamers. The engine companies continued to run with hose wagons as two-piece engine companies into the 1940's.

Specialized Chemical Engine



1920 White Chemical Engine

Chief John T. Mertz was a devotee of chemical stream fire suppression use, claiming that 600 of 900 fire calls were extinguished with that method. In 1920 he acquired a White chemical engine with a 35-gal tank behind the driver's seat and two 60-gal chemical tanks mounted in the hose body. The apparatus did not carry any conventional fire hose but carried ground ladders and portable chemical extinguishers. It was intended to run as a separate manned company out of Headquarters on S. Broadway but the City would not give Chief Mertz the manpower to operate the rig. It would remain in reserve status. In the mid-20's the Chief suggested the rig be manned, operating as a flying squad and salvage unit. Once again the City Administration denied the Chief manpower to operate the apparatus. The chemical engine never saw regular service.

Couple Gear Electric-Drive Aerial Ladder Trucks



1914 Boyd/Couple Gear 85ft aerial

Akron was the only fire department in Northeast Ohio to use electric-drive aerial ladders. In 1914 Boyd supplied a "fixed" Couple Gear electric tractor for a straight 4-wheel 85-ft aerial ladder with tiller. Electric storage batteries mounted on the rig supplied power to a generator. The generator in turn supplied power to electric drive motors mounted in each wheel of the vehicle. When in quarters the batteries were connected to a charger. When in motion, and going down hill, the battery was designed to recharge. The technology limited the range of the truck sometimes requiring it be towed back to quarters. It also had a very slow speed. Newspaper articles reported that boys on bicycles could pass the truck while it was responding.

In 1921 AFD acquired a similar aerial ladder from Couple-Gear Electric Truck Company. This truck was a electric/gasoline engine combination hybrid. A 4-cyl, 57.9hp Williams gasoline engine was mounted on the chassis beyond the turntable. It supplied power to the 12.5kw generator that in turn supplied power to the electric motors in each wheel. The gasoline engine provided greater sustainability for the rig. The 75-ft aerial was raised by a Dahill air hoist provided by Ahrens-Fox.

For some reason the aerial ladder never saw regular service. It was placed in reserve status, being used only on special call. In addition to the 1914 Boyd, AFD turned to service ladder trucks for truck companies that included a 1920 Pirsch/White, a 1927 Mack, a 1929 Ahrens-Fox and a 1931 Seagrave. All the trucks had chemical tanks.



1921 Couple Gear 75ft aerial

Museum Adds Collection

By Bob Gahr, WRFM Member



Eddie Ziegler and his favorite fire toy

Western Reserve Fire Museum life member and fire buff Edward "Eddie" Ziegler was excited to loan the Museum a portion of his collection of antique fire toys in September, 2018. Eddie did not plan to own an actual fire truck and thus the next best thing would be to collect toy fire trucks which he has been doing successfully for over thirty years.

In Eddie's own words, "I thought that those who don't have a real fire truck would enjoy seeing my assortment of toy trucks". Eddie's collection includes fire trucks manufactured by Smith Miller, Hubley, Tootsie Toy, Keystone, Doepke, Buddy L, Nylint, and Marx. They date from 1920's through 1990's. The bulk are from the 1950's and include pumpers, ladder trucks, ambulances and fire chief cars. Of particular interest are models of fire stations from the 1920's and 1930's.

Eddie has purchased many of these trucks at the annual Flea Market and while traveling to the AACA meet in Hershey Pennsylvania with his brother-in-law Bob Gahr. Eddie's favorite

piece is the Smith Miller Mack hook and ladder truck. Upon completion of the exhibit of his collection in the built-in display cases on the second floor, Eddie visited with his sister to see them. Eddie's longtime friend, Dan Hayden, gave him a personal tour of the toy display and Museum. Eddie's especially pleased that his collection is being housed at the Museum where adults and children alike can enjoy toys from a bygone era

Eddie's interest in fire memorabilia started as a member of Western Reserve Fire Buff Association (WRFBA) in 1980. Eddie has been a regular at WRFBA events including musters. He's often seen helping out by setting up for the annual Flea Market or assisting in the kitchen. He also volunteered for many years at the Ohio Fires Chief's Conference and counts many of those retired chiefs as his friends.

Retired Willoughby Fire Chief, and current Munson Fire Chief, Al Zwegat, has known Eddie for over 20 years and always welcomed Eddie when he stopped by the Willoughby Fire Dept. Now that Eddie resides in Munson Twp., Chief Zwegat made him the unofficial Fire Marshal at Notre Dame. When Eddie moved from Willoughby, his neighbors, appreciating his fondness for the fire service, had a tree planted at the Willoughby Fire Station in Eddie's name. Eddie currently lives at the Villages in Munson Twp. and works for the Sisters of Notre Dame. He maintains a modest collection of fire trucks in his apartment and is happy to share his hobby with his neighbors.

When traveling in the US and abroad, Ed loves to visit fire stations and talk to the firefighters on duty, trade patches, and get the inside scoop on the best restaurants to try in town. Eddie will rotate his collection from time to time so be sure to stop by the museum to see what is new.

Annual Muster Returns to Barlow Farm Park

The Annual Fire Museum Bill & Ida Varnes Memorial Muster returns to Barlow Farm Park, 1965 Barlow Road (off SR 91 Darrow Road) in Hudson on Sunday, September 8, 2019. Hand drawn, horse drawn and motorized fire apparatus will be on display with the muster beginning at 10:00am. Apparatus owners and area fire departments are encouraged to bring antique and modern apparatus to the muster. Parade through Hudson at 12:30pm. Pot luck lunch at about 11:00am. Bring table service and a dish to pass. Hamburgers and hot dogs provided by the Fire Museum. Fallen fire fighters memorial service at 11:45am. Pumping of rigs after the parade at the park pond. Join us for a great day made possible by the Hudson Fire Department.



In Memoriam...CFD Assistant Chief Gordon Koscher



Fire Museum caisson and assembled honor guard

It is with deep sympathy that we report that retired Cleveland Fire Assistant Chief, Gordon Koscher, passed away in July. Gordon was a life-long Museum member, very active in our activities. He served on the Board of Trustees in the mid-1990's when discussions were underway on how to establish and operate a fire museum in Northeast Ohio. He also was a member of the Western Reserve Fire Buffs Association helping to arrange meetings in Cleveland and his hometown of Mantua. After his CFD retirement he became Fire Chief in Mantua.

WRFMC assisted at the funeral services providing our funeral caisson and Fire Museum Historian, Paul Nelson, delivered one of the eulogies at the service. CFD provided the Honor Guard and pall bearers. Rest in peace...165, Assistant Chief Koscher.

Calendar of Events

- **Sunday, September 8, 2019** Fire Museum/Bill & Ida Varnes Memorial Muster. Hudson, OH. Barlow Farm Park. Muster begins at 10:00am; parade through Hudson at 12:30pm. Ends about 2:00pm. Info at www.wrfmc.com.
- **Monday, September 23, 2019 –** Cleveland, OH. Special concert FIRE ON THE RIVER at the Fire Museum, 310 Carnegie Avenue at 7:00pm. Tickets on sale now. Info at wrfmc.com or www.BlueStreakEnsemble.com.
- **Sunday, October 6, 2019 –** Cleveland, OH. Fire Prevention Week Kickoff & Open House at the Fire Museum, 11:00am 3:00 pm. Visit website for more details at www.wrfmc.com.
- Saturday, October 12, 2019 Stark County Firefighters Parade. Marlboro, OH. Parade starts at 9:30am. Memorial service follows. Info at garyc@northcantonohio.gov.
- Thursday Saturday, February 27-29, 2020 (It's Leap Year) Charleston, SC. SPAAMFAA Winter Convention at Crowne Plaza, Charleston Airport Convention Center, 4831 Tanger Outlet Blvd, North Charleston, SC. Info at SPAAMFAA.org.



The Fire Museum is a member organization of IFBA and The Greater Cleveland Chapter of SPAAMFAA



CFD Trivia

By Paul Nelson

Q: Where was the first 5-alarm fire (Signal 5-5) in Cleveland?

A: At the Strauss Fixture and Supply Company, 515 Woodland Avenue, on January 20, 1931

A new set of running cards was placed in service on January 15, 1930 that included responses up to a fifth alarm. They replaced running books that only covered three alarms. New street boxes had been installed in 1928 and 1929 with 4-digit code wheels (also included some "10" boxes). Prior to that time almost all of the street boxes had 3-digit code wheels or less. The new running cards signals were 2-2, 2-2-2, 3-3, 3-3-3, 4-4, 4-4-4 and 5-5 alarms. In the first edition, a 5-5-5 alarm did not exist. The term "Signal" referred to any series of numbers transmitted over the telegraph system other than the actual street box number. In addition to the extra alarm signals, there were a list of signals for requesting additional companies to respond to a box, information signals to stations such as "laundry pickup," "turn on radios," "send gas company" and identification signals of officers such as 164, 165, 166, etc.



Last call fire for Chief George A. Wallace

Box 2171 (E. 9th Street & Kinsman Avenue) was transmitted on January 20, 1931 by the Alarm Office at 6:25pm after receiving calls for a fire in a building at that location. The Battalion Chief requested a 2-2-2 alarm at 6:28pm by sending that signal from the telegraph key inside the street box. (Radios had not yet become part of fire department operations.) At 6:30 pm a 5-5 signal was sent from the street box, skipping 3-3 and 4-4 alarms, as fire involved all four floors of the structure. It is believed that this was the shortest time ever between a 2nd and 5th alarm.

The fire brought 25 engines, four ladders, three squads, two hose companies and the water tower to the scene. A total of 20 streams were used. This was the last call fire for Chief George Wallace before he retired on March 1, 1931.

Some Parting Shots

Fire Museum Goes to the Zoo



No, not to mingle with elephants and giraffes, but our annual participation in the Greater Cleveland Safety Council's Safety Day at the Zoo. A chance to give fire safety information to many

young visitors and a chance to put out a 'fire." Jeff Campbell, Bob Szabo, Dan Hayden and Paul Nelson responded to the call. Here Jeff Campbell guides a future fire fighter on the nozzle while Danny Hayden shouts encouragement.

WKYC Live from the Roof

Both Monday and Tuesday nights of All Star baseball week saw Channel 3 Evening News broadcast from the roof of the Fire Museum. With Progressive Field in the background, the familiar anchors brought the news to Cleveland listeners at 6 and 7pm. WKYC also used our plaza for interviews from their



mobile studio. Jim Donovan is seen here on the air while Sara Shookman waits for her cue to enter the set.

Western Reserve Fire Museum at Cleveland, Inc.

310 Carnegie Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44115-2816

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SPECIAL
PROGRAM
AT THE
MUSEUM

September 23

7:00pm

The Bugle is a publication of the Western Reserve Fire Museum and Education Center. The entire contents © by Western Reserve Fire Museum at Cleveland, Inc.

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