

THE MUSEUM TRUMPET



Vol. 3. No. 1

The Official Newsletter of the San Jose Fire Museum

March 2012

Historic Day for San Jose Fire Museum

San Jose City Council Votes Unanimously to Make SJFD's "Old Station One" A Historic City Landmark

President's Message

By John McMillan

Lots of Museum News to Start Off the Year

The first quarter of 2012 has been jam-packed with a variety of San Jose Fire Museum (SJFM) activities and events.

We have more volunteers showing up each week to help us with different museum needs. In this newsletter, I want to thank a couple of new volunteers. First, there is Maggie Wisinski who is doing a wonderful job helping us catch up on our backlog of donation documentation. Maggie brings energy and great organizational skills to our group. Secondly, I want to recognize John Hodges for his efforts in cleaning and polishing apparatus and straightening up our storage areas.

As for the acquisition of SJFD's "Old Fire Station One", the SJFM met with the City of San Jose in February, 2012. We went on record as being definitely prepared to make an offer to purchase Old Fire Station One. The City acknowledged our announcement and will keep us in the loop when Old Fire Station One is officially up for sale. At this point (as I mentioned in our December, 2011 Newsletter), we do have a major partner to help us make a bid, but until the bidding process begins, we don't know who else might be competing with us for the property.

In this issue, we are unveiling the SJFM Annual Pin. This year's pin will be known as "The V12 Pin". For information on how and why this pin came about, please see the article on page 3. The V12 Pin will be delivered to everyone who makes a financial

It was eight years in the making, but finally on March 20, 2012, the San Jose City Council unanimously voted to make Old Fire Station One "A Designated City Landmark".

The all-important moment came after a few comments from the public and words of support from three Council members. The comments included words of support from Brian Grayson, President of the Preservation Action Council; Ramiro Torres, a Commissioner from the Landmarks Commission; and Warren Heid, the architect who actually did the design work on Old Fire Station One. After they spoke, there were some very positive comments from Council members Sam Liccardo, Don Rocha, and Ash Kahlra.

Finally, the vote came -- approximately 4 years after the Landmarks Commission made their original nomination for City Landmark status on Old Fire Station One. With some Council members absent due to illness, the final vote was 8 to 0!

There are a lot of people to thank. Over the years, many people kept this effort alive and moving forward.

...Continued on Page 2



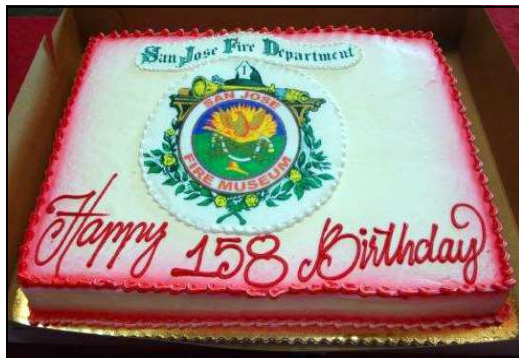
Old Station One's original architect, Warren Heid, addresses the San Jose City Council during the recent landmark discussion.

donation to the museum in 2012. The pin will also be available for purchase. The pin will sell for \$10, or two for \$15, at the Museum Gift Store.

The SJFM has a major need and we are looking for someone like you to help us find a writer. Someone who might be interested in writing the history of the San Jose Fire Department from about 1970 to our current day. We have a lot of historical information and resources available to assist the writer, so please think of us if you know of someone.

I contacted Richard Nailen, the author of "Guardians of the Garden City", this past month by phone and we had a wonderful conversation about the history of the SJFD and some of its wonderful characters. Richard now lives in Wisconsin and always wonders how the SJFM and the Department are doing. We have sent him a fire mark, museum pins and our newsletter, and will keep him in the loop on museum activities from now on. Richard told me about all his research work that he accumulated for the Guardians book and that he has passed it on to members of the SJFD.

Fire Museum Helps SJFD Celebrate Its 158th Birthday!



On January 28, 2012, the San Jose Fire Museum (SJFM) hosted the 158th Anniversary of the San Jose Fire Department. The Museum was open from 1:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. with an official ceremony held at 3:00 P.M. There were over 200 people in attendance at any one time, and it was estimated that over 300 people came and went during the event.

The SJFM was honored that Department Chaplains Father Bill Stout and Gary Kalis attended for prayer during the ceremony. San Jose Fire Department Chief Willy McDonald and San Jose Firefighters Local 230 Executive Vice President Joel Phelan were our official speakers during the ceremony. For tradition, at the end of the ceremony, a fire bell rang eight times to signify the eighth year of the decade.

This year, we officially acknowledged that Retired Battalion Chiefs Larry Cunningham and Lawrence Campbell and Retired Fire Captain Sam Seibert are the first members of the rank of "Chief Engineer". This rank is the SJFM's highest rank of recognition within the Museum's "Institution of Exramen" donation program.

During the ceremony, SJFM President, John McMillan, also noted the many collectible historic donations made during this past year. Photos of some of the most significant, recently donated items will appear in upcoming newsletters. And, if you have items of historical significance, please consider donating them to the Museum's ever-growing collection.

Finally, the SJFM wants to thank our caterer, Chef Mona Lisa, for the great appetizers she served and a special thank you to our two co-sponsors this year -- San Jose Firefighters Local 230 and the Neptune Society of Northern California.

Historic Day for San Jose Fire Museum

Continued from Page 1...

First, we need to thank Retired Battalion Chief Josh Weggeland and Retired Fire Captain Dennis Madigan who started the process. Their efforts motivated Franklin Maggi, of Archives and Architecture, to do a 2004 State Department of Parks and Recreation Historic Evaluation of the structure. This study revealed the building's eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of Historic Resources. This was the first step in the process to save the historic building and it received a very high score. This showed that Old Fire Station One was a great building and deserved historic consideration from the Landmarks Commission.

In 2008, Architect, Ed Janke was the President of the Landmarks Commission and he helped spearhead the nomination process. The Landmarks Commission voted unanimously for Old Fire Station One to receive a nomination for City Landmark status. We also received support from the City of San Jose Planning Department. As part of their responsibility, they do staff work to complement the Landmarks Commission and take the process to the next step and that is a City Council meeting.

Thanks should also be extended to Laurel Privetti, Deputy Director of the Planning Department, for her efforts. She has written the memorandums each time to get Old Fire Station One on the Council

Agenda for public discussion. This most recent effort was the third time Old Fire Station One had been placed on the City Council Agenda for Landmark status. It was taken off the City Council Agenda the first two times. But persistence paid off, and the third time was the charm!

Also, a big "Thank you" goes to Landmarks Commissioner Ramiro Torres, who helped the San Jose Fire Museum through this past year. Ramiro asked the Commission if he could be their representative and he worked closely with the SJFM to move Old Fire Station One forward in this process.

Finally, the SJFM wants to thank Council Members Sam Liccardo, Don Rocha, Ash Kahlra and Pierluigi Oliverio.

Now, for some final comments. The SJFM was honored that architect Warren Heid was able to attend this very important and historic City Council meeting. Mr. Heid worked for the architectural firm Binder and Curtis. In the late 1940s, he was a young draftsman who was a World War II veteran and had just graduated from Berkeley with a Honors Degree in Architecture. Warren was wanted on the Old Fire Station One project because he was educated on the new, modern architectural technology and that was of interest to the City of San Jose. Old Fire Station One was one of the first poured concrete buildings in the city and remains as the earliest example of the construction technique in San Jose.



Sam Seibert holds on to a wheel of the antique hose cart he donated to the SJFM. In recognition of this, and many other Seibert-donated items in the SJFM collection, the hose cart was named "Sheila" in honor of Sam's wife. Sheila Seibert sits to the right as SJFM member Sean Lovens looks on. The event took place at the SJFD 158th Birthday party.

Retiree News

Former Chief Campbell Nearing Another B'day Milestone — Number 105

This coming April 25, Retired SJFD Battalion Chief Lawrence A. Campbell will celebrate his 105th birthday. We hope to have some retired members of our Department go down to visit him where he lives in Southern California.

The SJFM has once again submitted the paperwork necessary to get Lawrence's face, a short bio, and a "Happy Birthday" wish from the "Today Show" on television. April 25th is a Wednesday this year, so try and watch NBC between 7:00 A.M. and 10:00 A.M.

Save the Date - June 16, 2012

San Jose Firefighter's Car Show in June

On Saturday, June 16, 2012, the San Jose Fire Museum and San Jose Firefighters will be hosting the San Jose Firefighter's 7th Annual Car and Motorcycle Show!

The event, open the public from 9:00 A.M. until 4:00 P.M., will be held at San Jose's History Park, located in Kelly Park at 1650 Senter Road. Antique and customized cars and trucks from the 1920s through present day, as well as motorcycles from every era, will be on display at this show. This year, there will be even more judged show classes for all entered vehicles and motorcycles. Last year's event was a big success with over 125 vehicles on display.

Advanced registration is now available through the car show web site, or you can register the day of the event. A \$20.00 donation is asked per vehicle with all proceeds benefitting the efforts of the San Jose

Fire Museum. The day of the event, vehicle registration will begin at 8:00 A.M.

The San Jose Fire Department has always enjoyed a rich tradition of events that have brought firefighters, their families and friends together. We hope you will join us for a day of cars, motorcycles, music, food, and fun for the entire family and friends.

Of course, events of this magnitude always demand a lot of work. If anyone is interested in volunteering, contact BC Steve Alvarado, Scott Boucher, Jim Carter, Dave Salazar, Tony Landeros, Tony Ojeda or by sending an e-mail message to: sjffcarshow@yahoo.com. In addition, a volunteer sign-up area is available on the car show's informative website at: <http://www.sanjosefirefighterscarshow.com>.



From the Collection

'37 American LaFrance Now A "Jewel" of Museum's Collection

The San Jose Fire Museum is the proud owner of a 1937 American LaFrance Senior Series 400 Metropolitan pumper.

This impressive rig was originally purchased by the Willow Glen Fire Department in 1936. This date is significant as it was just prior to the annexation of Willow Glen into the City of San Jose. Willow Glen bought the \$13,000 pumper to replace the worn out engine housed on Lincoln Avenue. The '37 LaFrance was delivered to Willow Glen, but in January 1937, it was moved to San Jose's Fire Station No. 1 on Market Street. There, it replaced the 1931 Mack fire engine -- which was moved to Station 2.

These Series 400 rigs are unique pieces of equipment with the suction pump located in front of the driver -- cowl-mounted between the driver and the engine. This was one of 143 Senior Series 400s ever built by American LaFrance and is powered by the company's industry-leading V12 engine that had two complete ignition systems.

With its long, tapered hood, skirted fenders, classically-proportioned gabled radiator, and oversized wheels, it was a triumph of industrial design. Designers combined an eye-pleasing blend of form and function, creating the industry's first stylishly designed fire engine. This was not merely a

utilitarian vehicle. It was a bold, stylish machine that was meant to be noticed!

The Series 400 Metropolitan pumpers had a set of characteristics that appealed to firefighters -- they were big, heavy, powerful, fast, and loud. Those of you who have listened to it run know that you can hear this rig coming -- often before you see it!

The rig was always a challenge to drive. According to retired SJFD Captain Forest

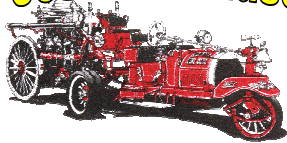
Wilcox, shifting the beast required a combination of strength and timing to get the RPMs matched up with the gear revolution of the transmission.

Another of this rig's distinctive features is its silver bell -- bumper-mounted in front of the radiator. On top of the bell is the classic V12 logo that was the inspiration for the 2012 Fire Museum Donation and Membership Pin. All donors to the Museum will receive this pin as a "Thank You."



The distinctive ornament that sits on top of the Museum's 1937 American LaFrance's bell was the inspiration for this year's annual pin. The logo features the firefighter's Maltese cross with the "V12" lettering signifying that this rig has a very impressive 12-cylinder power plant under the hood.

San Jose Fire Museum

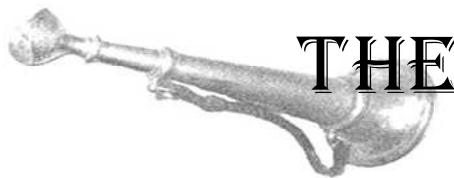


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DEDICATED TO PRESERVING THE HISTORY OF THE SAN JOSE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Calendar of Events

- April 10** SJFM Board Meeting at the Museum
9:00 A.M. to Noon
- May 8** SJFM Board Meeting at the Museum
9:00 A.M. to Noon
- May 22** "Kick-off" Organizational Meeting for
160th SJFD Firefighters Ball at the
Museum – 9:00 A.M. to Noon
- June 12** SJFM Board Meeting at the Museum
9:00 A.M. to Noon
- June 16** San Jose Firefighters' Car and Motor-
cycle Show – San Jose History Park
- Jan. 25, 2014** 160th SJFD Firefighters Ball (Tentative)

"The Museum Trumpet"

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John Whitaker

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