

THE MUSEUM TRUMPET



Vol. 4. No. 2

The Official Newsletter of the San Jose Fire Museum

June 2013

Important SJFD History Preserved!

Historic Journals Restored

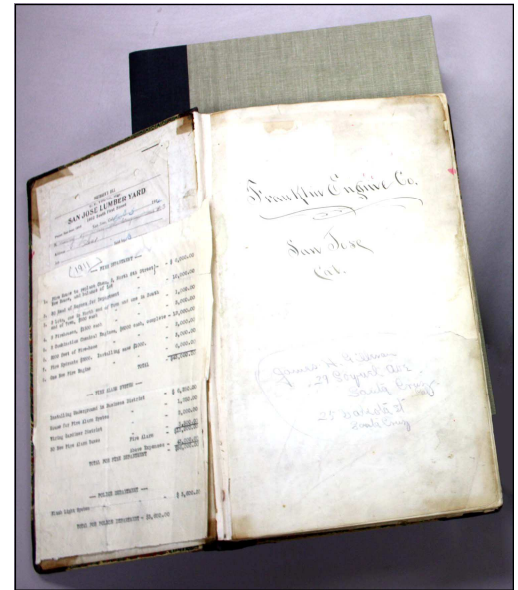
Over the past 5 years, the San Jose Fire Museum (SJFM) has received two extremely significant donations. Both of these donations are fire company journals that contain important history from the earliest days of the San Jose Fire Department. These beautifully handwritten documents include entries actually written by the fire officers of their time.

The first document received by the SJFM was the *Journal of Empire Engine Company No. 1*. This was a gift from the Overhouse Family. The journal covers the emergency and non-emergency activities of San Jose's first organized and recognized engine company dating from 1882 to 1900. We are very fortunate to have this document in our possession. Not many fire museum's can say they have a journal from the very first engine company in their city.

But, that's not all. Recently, the Garringer Family gifted to us the *Journal of Franklin Engine Company No. 3*. This document covers emergency and non-emergency activities dating from 1882 to 1911, including responses in San Jose for the 1906 Earthquake. Many of you know that one of our prized possessions is the Franklin Engine Company No. 3 steam fire engine.

To preserve this history, the SJFM has been working over the past 6 months with Kathleen Orlenko (a conservationist of paper and rare books) to have these 2 journals completely restored. We are happy to announce that the journals' restoration is finished and that they have

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This journal is from Franklin Engine Company No. 3. It has recently been preserved by conservationist Kathleen Orlenko. Shown beneath the document is a digital facsimile copy that will be available for historical research. A journal from San Jose's Empire Engine Company No. 1 has undergone a similar preservation.

President's Message

By John A. McMillan

Back to the Well

As president of the San Jose Fire Museum (SJFM), I feel compelled to once again ask for your financial support.

We are getting very close to actually purchasing Old Fire Station One and finances need to be in place -- both for monthly on-going costs and building a capital improvement fund to seriously make a start in restoration. To accomplish this, we need to show potential partners that this is real!

The SJFM is about to unveil our *Old Fire Station One Capital Improvement Plan*, probably in the Fall of 2013. This document will lay out the need for capital investment and how the finances will be used. While all this is going on, we are expanding our

monthly, on-going donation plan. The bottom line is this -- we need financial help now, more than ever!!!

To Our San Jose Firefighter Friends:

There are over 1,400 active and retired San Jose Firefighters that the SJFM has tried to reach out to over the past 5 years. About 300 of you have made some form of one-time or on-going financial donation. We thank anyone who has made some form of contribution to us.

These donations keep us going from month to month while operating out of a City-owned warehouse. But, they won't come close to meeting our needs when we make Old Fire Station One a real Fire Museum open to the public.

So, once again, we need to reach out to all of you. Now is the time for you to get on board and start donating. And please don't

think your contribution will not make a difference, because it will. I believe too many of you are either too busy with a lot on your plate or you figure someone else is covering the necessary donations. This is your department's story and it needs to be told.

To the Private Sector:

The San Jose Fire Museum's unique collection of antique apparatus and documentation is one of the largest and finest in the United States. That sounds like an exaggeration, but it's not!

This collection contains over 30 pieces of antique fire apparatus. This includes hose carts, hand pumpers, hook and ladders, steamers, fire engine pumpers, chemical hose wagons, fire chief cars and aerial ladder trucks. The walls of our warehouse are lined with hand tools, ladders, helmets and badges. And, our research library includes

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Journals Preserved

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received their full conservation, along with digitization and the production of a digital facsimile of each journal.

We want to thank Kathleen for her professional services. It was a monumental effort. Also, a very special thank you goes out to our two partners who sponsored this effort — Rob Bettencourt (sponsor of Empire Engine Company No. 1's journal) and John Davis (sponsor of Franklin Engine Company No. 3's journal). Both of these men donated significant funding that made this possible.

A good example of the history contained in these journals is shown in the article below.



William B. Tennant was a San Jose Firefighter whose legal actions were described in the journal of Franklin Engine Company No. 3.

From Franklin Engine Co. No. 3

Journal Contains A Look At Our Past

How did political issues impact our firefighters over 100 years ago? And, how did one firefighter take on the Fire Commission in court and win protection for all firefighters? On May 16, 1913, a *San Jose News* article reported a key decision from the Superior Court that clearly stated the protection of tenure for San Jose Firefighters.

William B. Tennant took the City to court to retain his 17-year job as a fireman which he was losing as a result of the order of reduction made by the Fire Commission. Judge John E. Richards rendered a decision that permanently settled the question of tenure and assured the members of the fire department that *"...so long as they perform their duties, they shall not be exposed to the caprice of a political commission or political mayor. If one of them is under suspicion of disloyalty to the reigning power, he shall not be cast out without consideration for his past services, but shall only be removed when charges have been proved."* Judge Richards made it very plain that no trumped up proceeding, irrespective of merit, will hold.

The Judge also made it clear that *"...no fireman has the right to engage in politics to the disadvantage of his duty or to take any active or partisan attitude either for or against a particular candidate. He shall vote as any other citizen for whichever candidate he prefers and must confine (his) political activities."*

This was a landmark case for the members of the department. Prior to that time, a fireman had to show unmistakably which side he was on and promotion or degradation was determined from a purely political standpoint. There was a time when firefighters were even compelled to patronize certain mercantile establishments that were known to be "friendly". It was not exceptional for disregard of this unwritten rule to be followed by dismissal. It was felt that the decision by Judge Richards would discourage a return to a petty period of petty men and petty politics.

And what happened to Tennant? Having a high record of efficiency during his seventeen years with the department, it was resolved that *"...(he) could not be degraded on a trivial pretext without trial. If he offended the rules or disobeyed authority, then proper action must include sufficient evidence and a trial."*

The article closes with an interesting warning to the Fire Commission:

"But the Commission will do well to remember that the public has its eye upon it and will be satisfied with nothing short of an impartial trial and a clean verdict. The fireman has hazards enough for small compensation without being exposed to the spitefulness of political masters whose chief concern is the promotion of special 'favorites'."

This snapshot of our past, and how it has impacted us today, is but a tidbit of the interesting things you can find out at the San Jose Fire Museum.

Tour Time

SJFM Continues to Host Several Meetings & Tours



County Fire Chiefs posed for a group photo during their monthly meeting held at the San Jose Fire Museum in May.



Cadets from the Central County Occupational Center Fire Science Program recently met with the County's Fire Chiefs at the SJFM.



On Wednesday, June 5th, members of the Original Tin Car Club stopped by for a tour.



Museum VP Jim Carter spoke to the latest graduates from the SJFD Training Academy.

President's Message

Continued from Page 1...

historical pictures and written documents. Items in the collection date back to the early 1800s -- starting with our 1810 James Smith Hand Pumper.

As many of you know, our number one goal is to place this collection in Old Fire Station One, a historic building located in downtown San Jose. Old Fire Station One has City Landmark status and, over the last 3 months, has entered into the application process to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This is the official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation. Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic resources.

Our preservation effort includes restoration of Old Fire Station One so the public can safely tour the building, view our collection, and receive public safety education while learning about this important part of San Jose's great history. We expect that this museum will become a destination for visitors to our city, members of our community, and, most importantly, the children from our varied neighborhoods.

To accomplish this, we need partners like you to make a difference and donate to this great cause. We have 4 phases to the project and the total cost for purchase and restoration is over 6 million dollars. Any amount you can give will be appreciated. The SJFM is currently working on a variety of methods to properly recognize all the donations that are made.

In Summary:

The SJFM is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, so the majority of your donations are tax deductible. The time is now, it does not matter whether you are a firefighter or private citizen. This collection is for everyone, and it needs a home in downtown San Jose.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

The San Jose Fire Museum is now open to the public Tue. and Thur., except holidays.

Hours are 9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.

We are also available on Saturdays, by appointment only. You can contact us through our website, or call: 1 (408) 793-4321.

Bring the Family

Firefighters' Car Show to Continue Annual Tradition

The San Jose Firefighters' Car Show is rapidly gearing up for its display of hot rods, classics, custom cars, trucks and motorcycles. In addition, the San Jose Fire Museum will have several antique vehicles on display from our collection. This year, the annual event will be held on Saturday, Sept. 21, from 3:00 P.M. until 8:00 P.M.

This is the 8th year that the show has been presented beginning at the Fire Training Center as just a get-together of firefighters and their cars. Over the years, it has evolved into a public event held at San Jose's History Park. Each year, the show has increased participation and this year will be no different.

The event has changed from an all-day show to an evening gathering in the park. Once again, as in years past, food will be provided by MOJO's along with the availability of beer and wine for purchase. Various booths with items of interest will also be present.

Live music will be performed by Steve Alvarado and the Rhythm Merchants. This year,

SAN JOSE FIREFIGHTERS
8TH ANNUAL BENEFIT


**HOT RODS
ANTIQUES
CLASSICS and
MOTORCYCLES** CAR SHOW


At San Jose's History Park
Sat., Sept. 21, 2013
3:00 to 8:00 P.M.
Admission is Free to the Public

This Event is A Fundraiser for
The San Jose Fire Museum

Come and enjoy a picnic under the trees while surrounded by many friends, family, classic cars and antique fire apparatus.

All proceeds from the event will benefit the efforts of the San Jose Fire Museum.



Food, Wine and Beer from
  

\$25 donation for pre-registration.
Registration will be \$30 day-of-event.
Car Show check-in will begin at 2:00 P.M.

For Additional Information, Contact Us At: sjffcarshow@yahoo.com
For Pre-registration, Go To: www.sanjosefirefighterscarshow.com

Come and enjoy a picnic under the trees while surrounded by many friends, family, classic cars, motorcycles and antique fire apparatus.

the band RPM will also be performing.

If you would like to participate, please visit <http://www.sanjosefirefighterscarshow.com> to register your car, truck or motorcycle.

If you are interested in having a booth, please contact Jim Carter via e-mail at: jhcarter1038@yahoo.com.

Something for Everyone

Museum "Stores" Recently Expanded

Our Museum Store recently got a fashionable new home! Through the generosity of Sam Seibert and Derek Parmer, along with help from Dave Wood, Nick Grossi and Ed Del Prete, the new store has a vintage look and plenty of room to further expand our offerings.

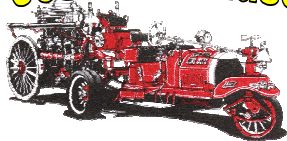
Come by and pick from a wide assortment of shirts, sweats or jackets (clothing for men, women and children), not to mention hats, buckles, pins and patches. Dress up your vehicle with a license plate frame, receiver plug or decal, add a mouse pad or coffee mug to your desk, or buy a copy of *The Guardians of the Garden City* to learn more about the SJFD.

We are expanding our line for women and children and looking for new items representing the rich and fascinating history reflected throughout the museum. Send us your suggestions. The store is not only a fundraiser for the museum but also provides an opportunity for our many visitors to take a memento home with them.

Come by the Museum and pick out a special souvenir of your own!



San Jose Fire Museum

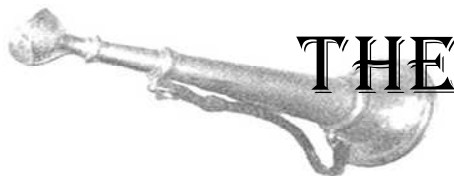


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DEDICATED TO PRESERVING THE HISTORY OF THE SAN JOSE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Calendar of Events

- Aug. 13** **SJFM Board Meeting at the Museum**
9:00 A.M. to Noon
- Sept. 10** **SJFM Board Meeting at the Museum**
9:00 A.M. to Noon
- Sept. 21** **San Jose Firefighters' Car and Mo-**
torcycle Show, San Jose History Park
3:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M.
- Oct. 8** **SJFM Board Meeting at the Museum**
9:00 A.M. to Noon
- Jan. 25, 2014** - **Celebration of the 160th Anniver-**
sary of the San Jose Fire Department

"The Museum Trumpet"

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