

THE MUSEUM TRUMPET



Vol. 4. No. 3

The Official Newsletter of the San Jose Fire Museum

September 2013

President's Message

By John A. McMillan

A lot has happened over this past quarter.

Between upgrading our website, completing restoration projects, receiving historical donations, planning events like the Firefighters' Car Show and continued discussions on the acquisition of Old Fire Station One, we have been very, very busy.

First, I want to thank all the volunteers and San Jose Fire Museum (SJFM) Board Members that make this all possible -- week in and week out. The SJFM is busy, basically, every week of the year.

Visit our new, upgraded Museum website (www.sjfiremuseum.org) and you'll see the great work that our volunteer staff has done to improve its appearance and ease of use. This site is the primary way we get new and updated information out to all of our members and the public. A special "thank you" goes out to Jim Carter who led the way in this upgrade. The Museum Board felt it was critical to spend the time and money to keep the site current and fresh.

The Museum Board is also very excited as our latest restoration project nears completion. About a year ago, we made a trade with History San Jose. We gave them a 4-wheeled hay wagon that was in our collection in trade for a 4-wheeled Studebaker wagon. Both of these wagons were used in the 1870s through the early 1900s.

Shortly after this trade, a decision was made to restore the Studebaker wagon to represent the San Jose Fire Department's Relief Hose Company No. 5. This all-volunteer Company went in service in June, 1885. The Studebaker wagon is very similar in style to the original Relief Hose Wagon shown in the drawing on page 2 of this newsletter. When complete, the restoration will be a very close reproduction. We expect that this wagon will be ready for dis-

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Major Announcement—Save the Date

160th Anniversary Party - SJFD Firefighters' Ball

Saturday, Jan. 25, 2014
Put It On Your Calendar!

On that date, the San Jose Fire Museum will celebrate the 160th Anniversary of the San Jose Fire Department by holding the "SJFD Firefighters' Ball". The Museum volunteers are working with the San Jose Fire Dept., San Jose Firefighters Local 230 and the Association of Retired San Jose Police Officers and Firefighters to create this celebration.

The dinner and dance will be held at the San Jose Elks Lodge, located in Willow Glen. The exact time, food and entertainment are still being worked out, but, we anticipate that the ticket price will be approximately \$75 per person with sales limited to 500 guests. The event will be a fund raiser for the San Jose Fire Museum.

Further information will be available on our web site as the details get worked out, but you can bet that it will be a fun evening. If you would like to volunteer for this event,



please phone Museum president John McMillan at (831) 359-2194 or you can e-mail him at: macmhalain@yahoo.com.

From a historical standpoint, the actual anniversary date of the San Jose Fire Department is January 27, 1854. It was on this date that the Common Council of San Jose officially recognized the organization of the San Jose Fire Department. On January 26, 1918, the SJFD held its first "Annual Firefighters' Ball" in modern times. It was a fund raiser to

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Rain Fails to Dampen Picnic

8th Annual Firefighters' Car Show Attracts Cars and Families to Event

A rare September rainfall failed to dampen spirits at the recent San Jose Firefighters' Car Show. Just how rare was it? According to weather reports, measurable rain had never fallen in San Jose on September 21st. Just our luck...but the party went on.

The rain provided a challenge throughout the event. During the five-hour time period of the show, it rained twice. But that didn't keep the car guys away. Immediately after the rainfall, members of several different clubs and fire departments retrieved their drying towels and began to wipe off their vehicles -- only to have it rain once again. It was quite a sight.

Given the conditions, the turnout this year was notable.

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160th Anniversary Firefighters' Ball

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help support the fire department's Widows and Orphans Organization.

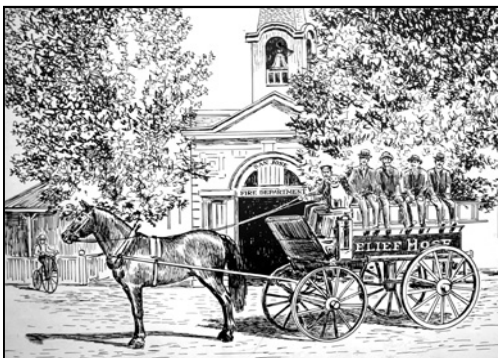
The most recent SJFD Firefighters' Ball took place on January 17, 2004. It was held at the San Jose Convention Center to celebrate the Department's 150th Anniversary. Over 1,000 people attended the event and many who were there said it was one of the best celebrations they had ever attended.

The 160th San Jose Firefighters' Ball will be open to everyone. The community, businesses, City of San Jose employees and all active and retired firefighters will be invited.

If you have an interest in attending the evening's event, then contact our Museum office by phone (408-793-4321) and leave a message. We will also be looking for sponsors for the Ball. So, if you would like to get involved with our anniversary celebration, please let us know how you'd like to help make this a fun evening.



The SJFM was proud to attend the recent "send-off" lunch held to honor SJFD Chief Willie McDonald. Here, Museum President John McMillan presents an appreciation plaque to the Chief as he leaves for a new job in Las Vegas.



As detailed in John McMillan's "President's Message", this is a drawing of SJFD's Relief Hose Wagon which is being recreated as our current Restoration Shop project.

From the Restoration Shop

Let's Restore SJFD's Engine 1

In December, 1958 the City of San Jose received its first 1250-gpm pumper – a brand new, American LaFrance, 900 Series, cab-forward, fire engine. It was designated "Equipment No. 28" and it carried 500 gallons of water in its on-board tank. It replaced the 1937 American LaFrance fire engine which had served the City as Engine Company No. 1 for 21 years.

Equipment 28 served as Engine Company No. 1, running out of 201 N. Market Street, until 1975. At that time, it was put into service as Engine Company No. 3's Hose Wagon. After many years of reliable service, this classic American fire engine was put into reserve status in 1981.

The good news is that this piece of San Jose history has not been lost. The San Jose Fire Museum (SJFM) has Equipment No. 28 in our collection of over 30 vehicles, and the Board of Directors has made the decision to restore it. The main consideration for its restoration is not the condition of the rig, but finding the money to fund the project. After careful discussion with a number of trusted restoration experts, it was determined that it will cost approximately \$20,000 to completely restore. That is a hefty sum of money for our non-profit organization.

So, the SJFM is announcing with this article that we are starting a fund-raising program to restore Engine No. 1. The goal is to raise the \$20,000 within the next 12 to 24 months. So you can visualize the project, we have included with this article some pictures of Engine No. 1 as it looked when in it was in service at Fire Station No. 1 and as it appears today sitting in our warehouse.

Besides monetary donations, we are also looking for individuals who would like to manage this project and possibly do some of the restoration. Please contact the San Jose Fire Museum (info@sjmuseum.org) if you would like to participate.



Left: This is the way San Jose Fire Department's Engine 1 looked when it was in service at 201 N. Market Street. The 1958 American LaFrance Series 900 pumper had a 500-gallon water tank and was capable of putting out 1,250 gpm.



Right: This is the former SJFD Engine 1 that the San Jose Fire Museum has in our collection. It is currently housed in the rear of the Museum's warehouse awaiting some tender, loving care. This classic American fire engine is considered to be an excellent candidate for our Restoration Shop's next challenge.

President's Message

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play at the SJFD 160th Anniversary Firefighters' Ball, which will be held on January 25, 2014.

During the last quarter, the Fire Museum received a great collection of photographs that were taken by the Engler brothers before they joined the SJFD. We have now added this donation to our Museum collection and thank them very much for the contribution. The photos capture images from many emergency responses that took place during the 1970s and 1980s. And, adding to their historical significance, many of the pictures are organized in albums and have captions or details included on the reverse side of the photos.

As this newsletter goes to press, the San Jose Firefighters' Car Show has just completed its 8th successful year. Despite a rare September rainfall, it was a huge success! The Car Show, and the upcoming SJFD Firefighters' Ball, are very important fund raising events for the SJFM and we need everyone's help by volunteering or making a donation.

Finally, we continue to work through different challenges in our quest to purchase Old Fire Station One. As we mentioned in our June newsletter, we are still in the application process for its inclusion in the National Registry. We are meeting with different individuals within the City and the County to help guide us through this acquisition process. In August, 2013, we submitted two letters to the Oversight Board -- the Successor Agency to the former San Jose Redevelopment Agency.

One of these letters was called a "Letter of Information". This was an official letter declaring as a priority our intent to purchase Old Fire Station One from the Successor Agency. We want the Agency to know that, when this asset goes out to bid, we intend to be the purchaser. We explained in the letter all the steps we are taking in preparing to purchase this Historic Landmark. In addition, we have asked the Successor Agency to complete an informal appraisal on Old Fire Station One -- which the San Jose Fire Museum has offered to fund.

The second letter we submitted was called a "Letter of Request". The purpose of this letter was to request temporary use of office and apparatus floor space located at Old Fire Station One. This space request would not impact the current tenant (Downtown

Firefighters' Car Show and Picnic

Continued from Page 1...

The Rod and Wheelers car club not only helped out with the parking, but also donated several raffle items. In addition, they donated \$500 to the burn foundation in the name of the RIM Firefighters who responded from San Jose. The Good Guys Association matched the donation with a \$500 donation of their own. Two bands entertained the crowd in between rain showers -- "RPM", a 1980s retro band, and the "Rhythm Merchants", led by Acting SJFD Deputy Chief Steve Alvarado.

Because of the rain, and the high quality of the cars entered, the judging was difficult. The stellar group of judges was supervised by Retired Fire Chief Dale Foster. He was aided by Fire Chief Rueben Torres, Deputy Chief Juan Diaz, retired Deputy Chief Dana Reed, Santa Clara County Fire Chief Ken Kehmna and Santa Clara County Supervisor Dave Cortese. A "Thank You" goes to all!



SJFD Fire Engineer Derek Parmer is shown grabbing a towel to wipe off his street rod entry.

Ice) because they do not currently use this portion of the building. The space we are identifying is currently a storage area for the San Jose Fire Department and the Fire Museum. If this request is approved, the Fire Museum will not be inviting the public into this space. Rather, our request is for the sole purpose of presenting a small Fire Museum display to use as a marketing opportunity in our effort to reach out to potential partners and/or sponsors. The financial help of the private sector will be greatly needed when we begin to restore Old Fire Station One.

At this point in time, we are waiting for a response from the Successor Agency. Very shortly, though, we expect to have answers to a lot of questions about this project which will be reported to you in our December, 2013 newsletter.

For the first time in the 8-year history of the car show, a car from a San Jose Firefighter won the "Best In Show" award. Retired Captain Tom Richardson took the honors with his beautiful 1960 Chevrolet Corvette.

Each vehicle entrant received a photo of their vehicle in front of the old Associated Gas Station and the winners received a framed photo of their vehicle with the title of the award they received. Awards were given out in 14 different categories.



SJFD's retired Tom Richardson and his classic 1960 Corvette won the "Best In Show" award.



"Betty Boop" was only one of the stand-out street rods, antiques cars, and motorcycles exhibited at this year's Firefighters' Car Show.

All Photos By Craig Allyn Rose

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.

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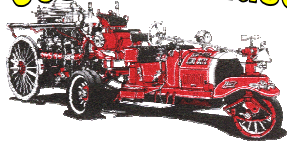


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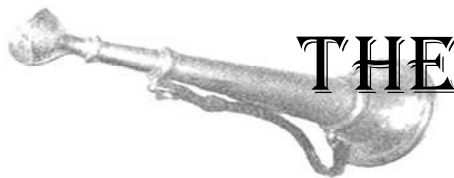
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DEDICATED TO PRESERVING THE HISTORY OF THE SAN JOSE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Calendar of Events

- Oct. 8** **SJFM Board Meeting at the Museum**
9:00 A.M. to Noon
- Nov. 12** **SJFM Board Meeting at the Museum**
9:00 A.M. to Noon
- Nov. 14** **Museum Tour for Victorian Preserva-**
tion Association, 7:00 P.M.
- Dec. 10** **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,
Dinner and Dance at SJ Elks Lodge
- Mar. 24, 2014** - **California Chapter of SPAAMFAA**
Business Meeting at the Museum

"The Museum Trumpet"

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