

THE MUSEUM TRUMPET



Vol. 7, No. 1

The Official Newsletter of the San Jose Fire Museum

February 2016

Important Apparatus Received

“The Little Giant” Fire Engine Will Become A Jewel In Our Collection

The San Jose Fire Museum (SJFM) is very excited to announce that we have received a 1914 Little Giant chemical fire engine. The Jordan family gifted this beautiful, historic apparatus to us in August of last year.

Little Giant trucks were made by Chicago Pneumatic Tool Company from 1912 to 1917. Our Little Giant truck is a one-ton chassis with a 4 cylinder engine that was made in 1914 and converted into a fire engine a year later. Two pairs of soda-acid

extinguishers were installed with a hose reel attached to each set. One set of tanks is located behind the driver and the other set is in the rear of the vehicle.

Many people think that a chemical fire engine was used to fight chemical fires. Not true. The word “chemical” in this case refers to the method used to create pressure in the water supply tank. A soda-acid extinguisher is comprised of a tank of water and a few pounds of baking soda. When a quart or more of sulfuric acid is added, a chemical reaction occurs and high pressure is created in the tank. This pressure moves water through the hose that is carried on the apparatus. This type of water delivery system for firefighting requires no pump.

This engine first served the town of Newark, Calif. in 1915 and was later moved to



“The Little Giant” Fire Engine on the day the Museum took delivery.

Russell City, Calif. after the city of Newark had hydrants installed. Russell City would later become the city of Hayward.

As a young man, the grandfather of the Jordan family fell in love with the Little Giant fire engine. In 1930, he purchased it at the age of 15. It was treasured all of his life and the Jordan family decided to donate it to the

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President's Message

By John A. McMillan

The San Jose Fire Museum (SJFM) Board of Directors has been very busy on a number of fronts. We have multiple projects that have been on-going through most of 2015 and continue into 2016.

We have just completed updating our "Institution of Extramem Program". This is our primary donation program that allows active and retired firefighters to contribute to the SJFM. Recently, the program grew by 17 members and is now 264 strong. I am proud to say that we have added 4 new members to the “Chief Engineer” top-level of giving. These donors include: Dale Foster, Joe Roberts, John A. McMillan, and Kevin Conant.

About 5 months ago, the SJFM received a very nice apparatus donation. It is a 1914 Chemical Fire Engine known as “The Little Giant”. It was originally put in service by the Newark Fire Department — right here in the Bay Area. The Jordan Family has

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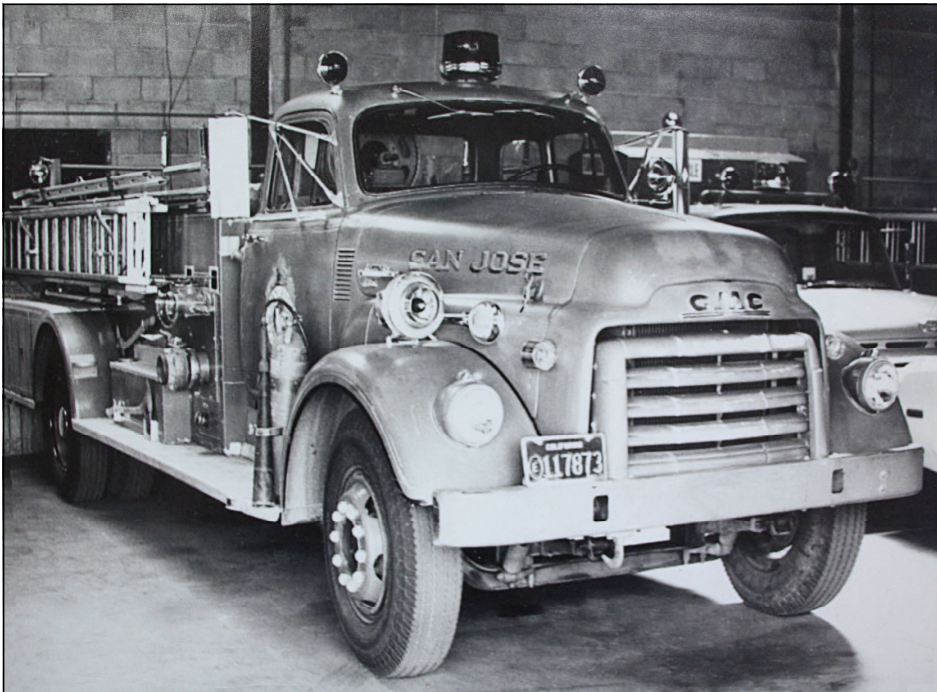


Work has begun at the Preservation Shop to return “The Little Giant” to its original appearance.



Collection Corner

San Jose Fire's Former Squad 11 To Undergo Total Restoration



Above: Squad 11 today — as it sits at the Fire Museum Warehouse awaiting full restoration.

Left: San Jose Fire's Squad 11 as it appeared when it was in service as a front line vehicle.

When “Old Fire Station One” was originally opened in 1951, the station was staffed with an Engine, a Truck, and a Squad. The Squad was designated as “Squad 11” and, in later years, that designation became E101. The Squad responded to all structure fires in the city with a Battalion Chief, a Driver, and sometimes a Firefighter. One of the vehicles used in the early years was a 1953 GMC pumper. This was a common vehicle at the time and there were many scattered about the city of San Jose.

The San Jose Fire Museum currently is in possession of such an Engine. The Engine was discovered in a field in Gilroy several years ago. It was purchased from the owner for \$500 and has been in storage at the Fire Museum’s Senter Rd. warehouse.

Capt. Gordon Wallace once served on Squad 11. He passed away last year and a memorial was held at the Fire Museum. It had been Captain Wallace’s desire to have the old Engine fully restored to its original glory.

The Wallace Family has generously donated a little over \$11,000 to restore Squad 11. But, additional funding is needed to complete the job. Donations may be made to the Museum specifically for Squad 11 work.

The museum will be restoring Squad 11 beginning in March. The restoration will take a couple of years and a lot of work will be required. Work on Squad 11 will occur at the museum warehouse on Thursdays and Fridays from 9 A.M. until 12 noon and your help would be greatly appreciated. No particular skill is required, just the desire to help us get Squad 11 back to once again looking good and running well.

Photo Ops

Fire Museum Stays Busy with a Variety of Activities and Group Visits



Above: Meet ‘n Greet for Chief Curtis Jacobson was hosted by the Fire Museum and firefighters Local 230.



Above Right: Museum hosted a badging ceremony for SJFD’s newest Radio Dispatchers.

Right: Our newly appointed Steering Committee met at the Museum to help guide the planning and construction process for “Old Fire Station One”.

Left: Visitors to Christmas in the Park in downtown San Jose were once again treated to a miniature fire station housing our Engine 1/2.



President's Message

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donated this incredible fire apparatus to us and we have a nice article about it in this newsletter.

We continue to make minor improvements at “Old Fire Station One”. There are now 2 working bathrooms on the first floor and a security system is now in operation. And by the time you receive this newsletter, we will have a multi-camera video security system installed and operational. In addition, we have begun to set up a small museum display on the apparatus floor. Please drive by at night and you will see our Franklin Engine Co. No. 3 steamer all lit up in the front middle bay. It is the primary focal point of our exhibit for potential donors.

As you read this, we are in the middle of a Feasibility Study. This is a process to help us determine the financial potential of a Fire Museum located in downtown San Jose. The study will determine if there is an interest in the community for this type of museum and if there is a donation capacity to fund it.

The study includes over 35 interviews with key members of our South Bay Community. The interviews are confidential and are done by a Netzel Grigsby Associates, Inc. Consultant.

Franklin Engine 3 Steamer Moved to “Old Station One” for Donors to View

Our Franklin Engine Co. 3 steamer was recently moved to “Old Station One” to be part of a temporary display. As the Fire Museum moves closer and closer to starting a major fund raising campaign, the Museum’s Board of Directors thought it would be advantageous to have a display at the site of the future Museum. In this way, major donors will be better able to see the buildings’ potential.

Thanks to the help of Campbell’s Towing, the move was accomplished quickly with no damage to the museum-quality steamer.



Top: Campbell Towing delivered our steamer to “Old Station One” for display to potential donors. Bottom: Franklin Engine Co. 3 is positioned in the center bay — floodlit for nighttime viewing.

“The Little Giant” Chemical Fire Engine In Museum Collection

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the SJFM in 2015 -- after considering a number of other fire museum organizations.

Fortunately for us, The Little Giant was in running condition when we picked it up. It is now being housed at the Preservation Shop at History San Jose. There, it will benefit from some tender loving care. It will receive some new hard-rubber tires mounted on the wood and steel wheels, a complete engine tune-up, and general repairs and necessary improvements.

While not a part of San Jose fire history, it is a special piece of Bay Area history and we will be proud to share its interesting story with future visitors to the Fire Museum.

From the Editor

New Publication Schedule for “The Museum Trumpet” Quarterly Newsletter

Did you notice?

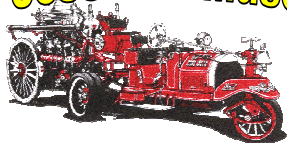
With this issue of *The Museum Trumpet*, we have changed our publication schedule. We found that the publication of a newsletter around the Christmas Holiday season was not practical. It was becoming difficult for the museum staff to gather data and write articles during this celebratory time. And, we found that the newsletter was arriving during a time when our readers were already busy and receiving a larger than normal mail delivery. Basically, the timing was not conducive to getting our message across.

So, as we begin our seventh year of this newsletter, *The Museum Trumpet* will be published on the following schedule:

- Volume 1 — February
- Volume 2 — May
- Volume 3 — August
- Volume 4 — November

We anticipate that this schedule will better serve our readers, and look forward to providing you with the latest news as we build our fire museum in downtown San Jose.

San Jose Fire Museum

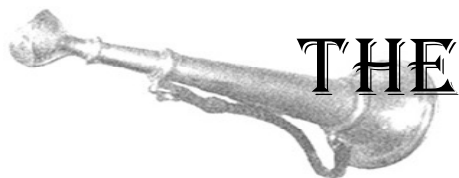


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DEDICATED TO PRESERVING THE HISTORY OF THE SAN JOSE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Calendar of Events

- Feb. 9, 2016** SJFM Board Meeting at the Museum Warehouse — 9:00 A.M. to Noon
- Mar. 8, 2016** SJFM Board Meeting at the Museum Warehouse — 9:00 A.M. to Noon
- Apr. 12, 2016** SJFM Board Meeting at the Museum Warehouse — 9:00 A.M. to Noon
- April, 2016** SJFM to host Firefighter BBQ at Old Fire Station One — Exact Date TBD

Are You A Mechanic?

If you have experience as a truck mechanic, or know someone who does, the SJFM is in need of your volunteer help and expertise. Contact Museum President John A. McMillan at: (831) 359-2194.

"The Museum Trumpet"

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