



# THE MUSEUM TRUMPET



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The Official Newsletter of the San Jose Fire Museum

January 2023

## 1929 REO CHIEFS CAR

The Fire Museum has in the collection a 1929 REO Fire Chiefs Car. The vehicle was obtained in the early 1970's. The car was donated to the muster team. The Fire Department Shop restored the vehicle to its present state. Chief Master Mechanic Don Wisinski who at the time was a very active and supportive member of the San Jose Fire Department Muster Team was primarily responsible for the restoration. The car was restored to be a Fire Chiefs car complete with red lights and siren.

The vehicle is all original and is powered by a 280 cubic inch 6 cylinder which puts out a respectable 80 horsepower. REO stands for Ransom Eli Olds who as a pioneering auto manufacturer in 1905 established the REO Auto Company. The company specialized in trucks.



1929 REO, SAN JOSE FIRE CHIEF APPARATUS.  
OWNED BY THE SAN JOSE FIRE MUSEUM.

The car sits on a truck chassis so the ride is

very firm. No power steering and a 4-speed manual transmission with a compound low gear makes the car a challenge to drive. In 1967 Diamond T and REO were combined and became a division of the White Motor Company.

The vehicle has been used in many parades and has been used by members of the department for wedding ceremonies and photographs.



SJFD RETIRED FIRE CAPTAIN SAM SEIBERT RELAXING AFTER JUST FINISHING A VIDEO TAPING OF SAM WELCOMING THE PUBLIC INTO THE SAN JOSE FIRE MUSEUM.

## San Jose Fire Museum





SAM PROUDLY STANDING IN THE  
UPDATED SEIBERT GALLERY.



SJFD RECRUIT GRADUATION CEREMONY HELD AT OLD  
FIRE STATION ONE ON NOVEMBER 18TH. FIRE CHIEF  
ROBERT SAPIEN SWEARING THEM IN WITH CITY OF SAN  
JOSE CITY MANAGER JENNIFER MAGUIRE PRESENT.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By John A. McMillan



As we close out the Year 2022, the San Jose Fire Museum (SJFM) has a lot to celebrate. We are now completing our 6th year owning Old Fire Station One (OFS1). Many of you have visited OFS1 in recent years and have witnessed many improvements to this historic old fire station, especially on the first floor area. Well we want to go to the next step and you will see an article in this newsletter explaining “The Next Big Step”.

The Year 2022 was a big success in many areas. We continued to receive both cash donations and firefighter historical artifacts from many of you. We have described in past Newsletters, many of our recent OFS1 Capital Improvements and we will continue this process leading into 2023. Besides improvements to OFS1, we continue to restore historic SJFD Fire Apparatus. Jim Carter keeps you updated with newsletter articles throughout the year. With the help of our Director of Collections, Ed DelPrete and Director of Facilities, Dave Wood, they continue to design and build displays for OFS1. They recently updated the Seibert Gallery with new displays, installed a new fire helmet display on the apparatus floor and are now working on a Fire Chief Pictorial Display on the hallway wall outside the Fire Chief Office Display.

The SJFM is very happy and excited to support the San Jose Fire Department with the creation of a 2023 Yearbook. Board members are involved in a few areas of support. This past 3 months we enjoyed OFS1 as the host site for a number of events. Firefighters Local 230 hosted a Firefighter Memorial Reception on November 12th, 2022 with about 120 people in attendance. Retired SJFD Fire Captain Bobby Wells Memorial Service Reception was held on November 30th, 2022 and about 100 guests attended that event. Then on December 1st, Fire Associates held their annual dinner and announcement of their new Board for 2023. On December 15th, the SJFD Bureau of Fire Prevention held their annual holiday lunch with about 40 guests in attendance. Then our friends, The Rod & Wheelers held an Appreciation Dinner on December 17th with 40 guests in attendance. The final event of 2022 was December 20th, the SJFD Fire Administration held their annual holiday lunch with about 50 guests in attendance.

In closing, our SJFM Board of Directors hope you enjoyed a great holiday with family & friends and wish you a very Happy New Year!

## THE NEXT BIG STEP

The San Jose Fire Museum (SJFM) Board of Directors has made a big decision. At our December 8th, 2022 Board Meeting, we discussed and approved a strategy to move forward to finish the remodel of Old Fire Station One (OFS1). The goal is to try and get OFS1 in service for public use ASAP while going through this “Next Big Step” Remodel. Keep two things in mind, the steps below do not include building out the backyard of OFS1 with a new exhibit space. Also, there is a funding shortfall of 2.5 million dollars to complete this Big Step!

We want you to see our strategy with each step listed below:

- Our first step is to upgrade the first floor area with Americans with Disability Guidelines required. We will get an architect and contractor involved to complete this step so we can open the doors to the public as soon as possible.
- Next we will work with Garden City Construction to perform a seismic upgrade of the entire building. We already have started the Engineering Phase so we are ready to plan for construction. During this phase we plan to keep the Fire Museum open on the first floor space area.

We have the necessary funding to complete these first 2 steps. The additional 2.5 million we need to complete this Big Step covers some major construction areas at OFS1. These areas include adding sprinklers upstairs & downstairs, an elevator, a new designated fire escape staircase, a new heating & cooling system upstairs, a new roof along with a complete remodel of all ceiling, wall, floor surfaces and restrooms on the second floor.

We are delaying the buildout of the backyard for now. So first we will finish restoring the original building and later look at adding the buildout of the back yard new exhibit space. Our hope is to finally get OFS1 completely remodeled as a State of the Art Fire Museum in Downtown San Jose.

Ok now the important news. Another big reminder that we need everyone’s help with financial support. You can contribute to us either through payroll deduction each month, or make a one time donation anytime. We know that many of you are already making contributions to us and we thank

you and ask you to please continue. We also know that many of you are not donating and we plead you to start now! We also hope we can find some individuals that will consider making some sizable donations to us and help us to meet our 2.5 million dollar goal. Please contact John McMillan or Jim Carter (There contact info is found on the back page of the newsletter) if you want to find out how to help.



**San Jose Fire Museum**



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*DEDICATED TO PRESERVING THE HISTORY OF THE SAN JOSE FIRE DEPARTMENT*

**SJFM IS IN NEED OF A  
BOARD MEMBER!**

**The San Jose Fire Museum  
is seeking to fill a vacant  
board position  
for  
Director of Fleet**

If you or someone you know is interested, contact Jim Carter or John McMillan for more information.

**“The Museum Trumpet”**

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