

# CONSTRUCTION WORKERS END CLEANUP AT GROUND ZERO

Union construction workers on May 28th cut down the last steel girder standing at the site of the World Trade Center towers in New York City, ending the most incredibly difficult, dangerous, heart-rending job of their lives.

Column No. 1001 B of 2 World Trade Center, the last symbolic piece of the unfathomable recovery effort, was cut down by members of Ironworkers Local 40, Teamsters, Operating Engineers Local 14 and 15, Laborers Locals 79 and 731 and Dock Builders Local 1456.

The 58 ton piece of steel was laid

on a flatbed truck, wrapped in black muslin and an American flag and set aside for a ceremony the next day marking the end of the recovery effort at what was ground zero in the September 11 terrorist attacks last year. More than 2,800 people died at the site, including hundreds of union members working in the towers or responding after the two hijacked aircraft hit the towers.

Members of the final crew and many other unions completed the massive cleanup in 37 weeks of 12-hour shifts - three months ahead of schedule

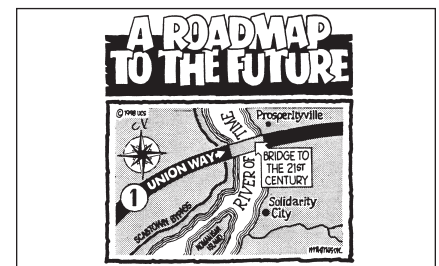
and under budget. They put in 1.5 million man hours as they cut, loaded and hauled away 10,000 to 15,000 tons of debris a day.

"The time here has played on their minds," the *New York Times* reported. "Over these past eight and a half months spent at ground zero, the workers are convinced they have seen ghosts and been visited by old friends in their dreams.

"They are sure they have inhaled asbestos and plastics and human remains, unsure of what the physical and spiritual effects of ground zero

will have on them in the days and months and years ahead."

When the final column was stowed away, the newspaper reported, the men and women marched up the ramp from the pit through a Navy Honor Guard, and each worker was handed an American Flag.



## REMEMBERING OUR FALLEN FIRE FIGHTERS

by Scott Mellott, 15/A

When I was in the research process back in 1987, for some reason I felt a need to visit the grave sites of the fire fighters who died in the line of duty. I visited all but five grave sites, because those were out of town and a couple were out of state. I discovered that eleven of our fallen fire fighters were buried in unmarked graves. Emil Thompson was buried in the "Firemen's Plot" in Glenwood Cemetery in an unmarked grave. In the early 1990's a group of concerned Houston Fire fighters started an effort to move the large statue back to Glenwood Cemetery from Fire Station 1. The statue was originally on the "Firemen's Plot" in Glenwood Cemetery but in 1975 the statue was moved from Glenwood Cemetery to Fire Station 1, which at the time was headquarters for the Houston Fire Department. In this process, headstones were purchased for Ed and several other fire fighters who were also buried in the "Fireman's Plot". After the 1988 yearbook was published, Molly Walker and Frank Catino's families came forward with information that the plots were indeed marked. That left eight grave sites still unmarked, one of them being a Houston Fire Chief who died in the line of duty in 1907. The committee that was responsible for the memorial wall at the new pension office collected funds to purchase the remaining eight headstones which were placed at the site in the fall of 2001.

Here is the list of the Fallen Fire Fighters for the month of June.

**June 8, 1932**

**Rusk, Charles Roland, Firefighter - Station 14**

**June 13, 1902**

**Johnson, Clifford W., Driver - Station 8**

**June 22, 1929**

**Hendricks, Rudolph "Rudy", Firefighter - Station 25**

**June 30, 1962**

**Hopkins, Claude Jackson, Chauffeur - Station 2**

[www.houstonfirememorial.org](http://www.houstonfirememorial.org)

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