



REMEMBERING OUR FALLEN FIRE FIGHTERS

by Scott Mellott, 15/A

LIST OF LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH ANNIVERSARIES FOR THE MONTH OF JULY:

**July 01, 1940 - "MOLLY" WALKER - Driver, Station 2
Bus/fire truck accident.**

**July 02, 1929 - EDGAR H. GRANT - Fire Fighter, Station 18
Train/fire truck accident.**

**July 03, 1929 - HARRY L. "RED" OXFORD
Fire Fighter, Station 18 - Train/fire truck accident.**

**July 11, 1929 - John S. Little - Captain, Station 18
Train/fire truck accident.**

**July 14, 1913 - Clifford A. Weise - Fire Fighter, Station 3
Supply wagon/train accident.**

**July 26, 1923 - HARRY DODD - Fire Fighter, Central Station
Passenger car/street car/fire truck accident.**

July has eight "line-of-duty death" anniversaries. All eight deaths were the result of five separate vehicular accidents. The five accidents involved fire trucks versus trains, passenger cars, a street car, and a city bus. All five of the accidents injured other fire fighters and civilians, ranging from minor to severe injuries including injuries to the mules pulling Supply Wagon 3. Out of the five accidents, two of them involved multiple fatalities.

This month's article shares some interesting information regarding the tragic accident that involved Engine 18 which killed three fire fighters.

Shortly after midnight on July 2, 1929, Engine 18 was dispatched to a house fire at 2426 Wilshire. The fire had progressed to the point where the fire was producing a large glow in the sky. Engine 18 took a route that would include Telephone Road and a Gulf Coast Line Railroad grade crossing. Engine 18 and the railroad engine pulling 53 cars arrived at the crossing at the same time. Engine 18 was broad-sided by the train.

Edgar Grant, age 27, a Houston fire fighter for less than 6 months, was dead at the scene. Harry Oxford, was a Houston fire fighter for less than a year and died the next day at Memorial Baptist on his 34th birthday. Their Captain, John S. Little, Sr., a 16 year veteran, was seriously injured and taken to Memorial Baptist Hospital, where he underwent several operations and lost his final battle eleven days later.

There were two other fire fighters on board Engine 18 who narrowly escaped death. Captain George "Pop" Wilson, who was one of two station captains and off duty, got on Engine 18 to ride to the fire with the crew. He was riding on the side and was able to jump away from the collision and sustained cuts and bruises. The chauffeur, Raymond Prewit, was injured and hospitalized.

After the accident, Engine 22 and Engine 20 were dispatched to take the place of Engine 18 at the house fire. Both Engine 22 and 20 took a different route but also had to cross the same track but at the Lawndale intersection taking a chance that the train was going in the opposite direction. However, the train had crossed the Lawndale intersection, and after colliding with Engine 18 blocked the path of the replacement engines. The fire fighters did not know this, and did not see the train's tank cars on the crossing until the last minute. The driver of Engine 22 slid sideways into a ditch to avoid a second deadly crash. After Engine 22 slid into the ditch, a quick thinking firefighter ran onto the street toward a fast moving Engine 20 in order to prevent a

**July 29, 1953 - JOSEPH JAMES SOLITO
Chauffeur, Station 8 - Ladder truck/fire truck collision.**

**July 29, 1953 - FIDEL CHABOLLA - Fire Fighter, Station 8
Ladder truck/fire truck collision.**

LIST OF FIRE FIGHTERS WHO HAVE RECENTLY DIED: **JOE THOMAS JONES**

Served HFD 1955 to 1988 Died on June 18th 2004

**FLOYD SYLVESTER CORRELL
Served HFD 1955 to 1988, Died on June 16th 2004**

**LUKE JOSEPH DRAGNA
Served HFD 1941 to 1977, Died on June 12th 2004**

**JESSIE L GREENING
Served HFD 1954 to 1985, Died on May 27, 2004**

**EDWARD EUGENE HALLIBURTON
Served HFD 1953 to 1956, Died on May 20th 2004**

**LAWRENCE "LARRY" NOEL MCDUFF
Served HFD 1961 to 1978, Died on April 22nd 2004.**

For updated retired Fire Fighter deaths refer to:
<http://www.houstonfirememorial.org>
Click on Recent Houston Fire Fighter Deaths.

third accident.

July of 1929, the HFD had to deal with the first multiple line of duty deaths. You would think that another train and fire truck accident would not happen any time soon. Unfortunately, five months later in December another train and fire truck accident occurred. Safety of the railroad grade crossing was to say the least "lacking" and would most likely be the culprit. Many crossings were not marked and as far as my knowledge were without crossing arms.

This time Engine 19 was struck by a freight train just a short distant from their station. Two fire fighters died bringing the total of line of duty deaths for the year 1929 to seven, proving a most tragic year for HFD.

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Upcoming Events:

Tunnel to Towers 5k Run

FDNY Fire fighter Stephen Siller Tunnel To Tower 5k. New York City, Sunday, September 26, 2004. <http://www.tunneltotowersrun.org>.

ANNUAL VALOR AWARDS

The ceremony will be held on October 1, 2004 at the Adam's Mark Hotel, 2900 Briar Park at Westheimer. It begins at 8:00 with a social hour and silent auction. Information about medal day is on the HFD Official website www.houstonfire.org - Select Medal Day and the page will open.

ANNUAL FIRE FIGHTERS MASS

Annual Fire fighters Mass for October 24, 2004 at the Sacred Heart Co- Cathedral , 1111 Pierce at 11 a.m.

ANNUAL FIREFIGHTER MEMORIAL CEREMONY

March 19th, time to be announced, at the Houston Firefighter's Memorial Garden, 4225 Interwood Parkway, near JFK & Beltway 8.

THE "SECRET LIST"

Don't forget to sign up for the "Secret List". This is an email newsletter from Chief Billy Goldfeder (no email junk, and he does not give out your address, I promise!) that will give you line-of-duty death information from around the country. The newsletter will also give you insight on many safety issues facing this country's fire service. Go to www.firefighterclosecalls.com , the site's menu is on the left, click on "Secret List" and sign up.