



# REMEMBERING OUR FALLEN FIRE FIGHTERS

by Scott Mellott, 15/A

## LIST OF LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH ANNIVERSARIES FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST:

**August 4, 1923 • J. A. "BOB" BOYD**  
Assistant Fire Chief - Central Station  
chemical truck he was riding hit a telephone pole

**August 6, 1941 • HORRACE OSCAR GASSOWAY**  
Fire Fighter - Station 10  
accident - two HFD apparatus

**August 19, 1926 • CLAUDE W. "RED" EDMONDS**  
Captain - Central Station  
fell off aerial

**August 21, 1938 • ALFORD HENRY SCHUTZE**  
District Chief  
chemical truck he was riding hit an Esplanade

**August 22, 1934 • ESKER J. ROGERS**  
Fire Fighter - Station 17  
accident between fire truck and city bus

## LIST OF FIRE FIGHTERS WHO HAVE RECENTLY DIED:

**JOSEPH RAY CANTRILL, JR.**  
Served HFD 2003 to 2004 - Died on July 21, 2004

**ISHMEL WORTH CONSFORD**  
Served HFD 1954 to 1974 - Died on July 15, 2004

**GARY KEITH PHILLIPS**  
Served HFD 1981 to 2000 - Died on July 5, 2004

**JOE THOMAS JONES**  
Served HFD 1955 to 1988 - Died on June 18, 2004

**FLOYD SYLVESTOR CORRELL**  
Served HFD 1955 to 1988 - Died on June 16, 2004

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

For updated retired Fire Fighter deaths refer to:

<http://www.houstonfirememorial.org>

Click on Recent Houston Fire Fighter Deaths.

For those of you that know me personally or have read this column for the past two years, you know that I have been doing extensive research pertaining to the personnel history of the Houston Fire Department.

My initial goal was to find as many Fire Fighters who have served the Houston Fire Department since 1895. This is a monumental task because of poor record keeping by the past fire department. However, on a positive note, the past City Directories have played a key role in my extracting names of our Fire Fighters from the past.

The Houston City Directory from about 1894 until about 1910 under the fire department's listing contained the name, rank and station of every Fire Fighter in the city. After 1916 the listings were consisted of only the stations and officers assigned to each station. However, the individual listing contained the rank and station of the Fire Fighter.

Two other things are assisting in my research. Back in the early 1930's the HFD hosted a Fire Chief's convention. The organizers put together a book that contained about 380 photos of everyone who was in the HFD at the time. This has proven to be one of the best pictorial histories of the fire department of that era. Secondly, in 1931 the fire department sent a professional photographer around to each station to take a group photo.

I am currently working on group pictures from 1931 for stations 2, 14, 16, 24 and 25. Using the 1932 Fire Chief's convention book and the city directories I have been able to identify a large number of Fire Fighters in these pictures.

Where I need help is contacting the men that entered the HFD in the 1940's. They should be able to recognize some of the men in the group photos. If you are one of those Fire Fighters, please give me a call and I can bring by a notebook that contains the close up shots so you can see if you recognize anyone. I just got the book back from Raymond Harrison and he was able to identify three of the Fire Fighters.

The end results of all of this matching a name to a face will be that once we identify as many of the men as possible in these 1931 group pictures, I will be able to send them to the respective station so that they can hang them on their wall to represent their past.

Now, as for these group pictures I have been talking about, it would be assuming on my part to say there was one for each of the 26 fire stations that existed at the time. These pictures were usually identified by a small grease pencil mark stating „Houston Fire Department, the station number and the date the picture was taken. Below is an example of the type of pictures I am referring to. This picture was loaned to me by April Dudensing-Ryan granddaughter of Walter C. Dudensing-HFD 1928-1964.

If you have one of these type of pictures or can help in the identification process please call me at (713) 729-6536 or email me at [scottmel@juno.com](mailto:scottmel@juno.com).

## STATION 16 - 1931

