



REMEMBERING OUR FALLEN FIRE FIGHTERS

by Scott Mellott, Retired

September 11th, 2001 is a day in history that sometimes I wish I could forget. Well that is not going to happen and my job is to make sure you don't forget either. Below is what I wrote in 2004 and I sincerely hope that you think of some of this information next month on the 7th anniversary of that really horrible day.

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THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF 9/11 IS NOW UPON US

September 11, 2001, is considered the worst day in history of New York City. I would also consider it one of the worst days in the history of the United States of America. The tragedy is compared to the attack on Pearl Harbor some 60 years before. It to, like 9/11, was an attack on American soil by a foreign enemy.

I really doubt that I need to remind you of what a horrible day September 11, 2001 was for everyone, but I am going to anyway.

I was off from work that day, because of an exercise injury. My wife was out of town on a business trip. Our only child, Kim, who lives in Dallas, was 8 months pregnant, calls shortly after 8am. I was still in bed and the phone woke me up. First thing she said was "where is my mother?" Of course not knowing what just happened in Lower Manhattan I panicked thinking something was horribly wrong with my child and or my unborn grandbaby.

My point here is that everyone reading this article probably remembers exactly what you were doing when you first heard that American Airlines, Flight 11 crashed into the World Trade Center Tower 1 at 8:46 a.m. Eastern Standard Time.

Because of timing, there were actually less people in building. Most started work at 9:00 a.m. and most were on their way to their respective towers. The two heavily traveled express elevators that went the distance of the North Tower were not yet running. These elevators led to the Windows of the World Restaurant and the observation deck. Both hot tourist attractions saw thousands of visitors everyday. This was one factor that helped lower the death toll.

When the North Tower was struck by American, Flight 11, the "pilot" executed a classic terrorist attack of a high rise building. This being, strike the building in the top third of the building. He placed the Boeing 767 into the 110 story building, at floors 94 through 98.

This tactic sent smoke and fire very quickly upward trapping the occupants of offices in the portion of the building above where the jet hit. The intense heat and flames and the impact of the airliner was the cause of the estimated 200 hundred people falling to their deaths. It is estimated by USA Today that only 4 people who were above the 94th floor in the North Tower found their way to safety.

The occupants of the South Tower, unlike their counterparts in the North Tower had warning that something was horribly wrong. With this warning they only had a short 16 and a half minutes before

United, Flight 175 crashed into their building. The ability of the workers on the north and west sides of the South Tower to see the plane crashing into the North Tower and to witness the horror of people jumping to escape the heat smoke and flames actually saved many lives. One woman from the South Tower looked out after the crash to see a man standing in a window with his tie flapping in the wind. The man looked toward the lady then stepped to his death. The woman immediately left the building to safety and lived to tell about it.

The actions of the South Tower occupants in the next 16 and a half minutes is what determined whether they died or lived to see their next birthday. Those located on the opposite sides of the crash could not see the burning North Tower nor did a lot of them even hear or feel the impact. For those who worked in the South Tower during the 1993 bombing left immediately after word spread that the North Tower had been struck by a jet liner and it was most likely not an accident.

There were problems created by this sudden mass exodus of the South Tower. In order to get down from the top section of either tower it was a two elevator journey. To get down to the ground from the higher floors one would have to take an elevator to an elevator lobby, then get on an express elevator to take a 45 second ride to the next lobby. Then they would get off and enter that lobby and ride the escalators down to the ground floor then out the doors to freedom. After the North Tower was hit that is exactly what the hundreds of workers in the South Tower were doing.

This however created a major problem. If you recall the picture of United, Flight 175 taken as it entered the building. The plane entered the building at an angle, with its right wing going into the 84th floor and the left wing going into the 78th floor. The problem was that the 78th floor housed one of those elevator lobbies I just told you about. The plane's wing created a slicing effect thus killing someone but sparing the person they were standing next to.

My point here is that this action of the "pilot" tipping the wings in order "take out" more floors did major damage. Because of the mass exodus of the South Tower out of fear that their building would also be hit, it was estimated that at least 200 or more people were killed at that 78th floor elevator lobby. In the South Tower it was estimated that 600 occupants were killed, one third of those being killed when the left wing of Flight 175 passed through the 78th floor elevator lobby.

So as far as civilians being killed, some of them had a decision to make, if they made the right one they are still getting up every morning. On the other hand, the FDNY firefighters, NYPD police officers, EMS workers, and the Port Authority supervisors, police officers and security, none of them had a choice. They stayed to do their job and make sure that thousands of World Trade Center workers made it safely out of their respective tower.

It has been estimated that this group of brave rescuers saved more than 25,000 World Trade Center workers that day. I hope that every day since and everyday from now on these "saved" souls live their lives to the fullest.

Just so that you will know and remember, each death at the World Trade Center was declared by the New York City medical examiner a Homicide.

All facts in this article came from various USA Today articles.

Remembering To Never Forget

JOSEPH JOSHUA BLACKMON
Served HFD 1964 to 1984
Died July 21, 2008

JOSEPH FLETCHER HOLMAN, JR.
Served HFD 1953 to 1991
Died July 2, 2008

SCOTT STEWART WINTERHALTER
Served HFD 1959 to 1990
Died June 29, 2008

MICHAEL ALLEN MAYS
Served HFD 2002 to 2008
Died June 24, 2008

JOHN CHARLES EAGLIN
Served HFD 1972 to 1999
Died June 18, 2008

ROBERT LOUIS DANBERG
Served HFD 1967 to 1980
Died June 10, 2008

DELBERT LEE WARWICK, SR.
Served HFD 1956 to 2005
Died June 1, 2008

CHRISTOPHER JASON BOISVERT
Served HFD 2008 to 2008
Died May 30, 2008

DWAYNE FRANCES GULLORY
Served HFD 1996 to 2008
Died May 18, 2008

BILLY ROYCE HESTER
Served HFD 1955 to 1986
Died May 6, 2008

LEON LARA EGUIA
Served HFD 1957 to 1977
Died May 4, 2008

CLARENCE DANIEL BYERS
Served HFD 1951 to 1972
Died May 2, 2008

JOEY SHELDON REED, SR.
Served HFD 1989 to 1993
Died April 21, 2008

MICKEY GENE PATE
Served HFD 1979 to 2008
Died April 17, 2008

OTTO W. MUELLER
Served HFD 1956 to 1982
Died March 26, 2008

ARLON FLOYD DRAKE
Served HFD 1953 to 1973
Died March 9, 2008

RICHARD HENRY DECKER
Served HFD 1961 to 1984
Died March 6, 2008

"WHITEY" LESTER O'NEAL MARTIN
Served HFD 1949 to 1988
Died March 2, 2008

ERIC DEWAYNE BRADY
Served HFD 1980 to 2004
Died February 15, 2008

BRICEY EUGENE CHILDRESS
Served HFD 1959 to 1986
Died February 9, 2008

DAVID LEE NORRIS
Served HFD 1975 to 2003
Died February 1, 2008

TED W. SANFORD
Served HFD 1946 to 1974
Died January 26, 2008

LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH ANNIVERSARIES FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST

August 4, 1923
J. A. "BOB" BOYD
Assistant Fire Chief,
Central Station

August 6, 1941
HORRACE OSCAR GASSOWAY
Fire Fighter, Station 10

August 19, 1926
CLAUDE W. "RED" EDMONDS
Captain, Central Station

August 21, 1938
ALFORD HENRY SCHUTZE
District Chief, Station 7

August 22, 1934
ESKER J. ROGERS
Fire Fighter, Station 17



Total from January 1, 2008 to present - 22 Deaths

Total for the Year 2007 - 43 Deaths

For current information on deceased Fire Fighters,
please go to my web site

www.houstonfirememorial.org

and click on "Recent Deaths" or email Scott at

scottmel@juno.com

The Faces of Local 341

1932 to 2008

Houston Professional Fire Fighter's Association



Station 38, 1120 Silber - 1974.

(L-R) Ken Broeder, Dan Dillard, Danny Givens, Captain C. R. Hickman, James Deweese.

Photo provided by Dan Dillard



Chief Jake Cook, late 1960's - New Ladder 21.

Photo provided by Jake Cook



Scott Fults - Fire Training Academy - 1970.

Photo provided by Scott Fults

The Faces of Local 341

1932 to 2008

Houston Professional Fire Fighter's Association



Richard Cole - Funeral of Tom Hutchings, April 8, 2006. Forest Park Cemetery.



Chief Kyle Atkinson and Arthur Broussard at incident on Kirby Drive, August 31, 2006.



E/O Chuck Byrd - Ladder 16 at incident on Kirby Drive, August 31, 2006.



District 31 - Jace Rogers, E/O and District Chief Mike Ferguson.

Photos provided by Scott Mellott