



REMEMBERING OUR FALLEN FIRE FIGHTERS

by Scott Mellott, 15/A

List of the line-of-duty death anniversaries for the month of March:

March 1, 1928 - GEORGE L. BISHOP- CAPTAIN
Station 4

March 10, 1953 - CHARLY A. MIDDLEKAUF
Assistant Chief - Central Station

March 12, 1951 - RUFUS JOHN "BULOCK" TEMPLET
Captain - Station 5

March 31, 1947 - JAMES EDWARD LOWTH
Fire Fighter - Station 26

See the list of our brother Fire Fighters who died in 2006 on the back page of this publication.

Last month was the 6th anniversary of the untimely deaths of two of our Fire Fighters, Louis Mayo and Kim Smith, who died on the morning of February 14th, which is of course Valentine's Day. A year ago, also in the month of February, the Houston Fire Department lost one of its finest officers, Captain Grady Burke. He perished in a house fire and several members of his crew barely escaped harms way.

Through the years, I have written in this column about Kim and Lewis. I am never at a loss of things to say about these two Fire Fighters. A few months ago, I was not sure how I wanted to handle the subject of my column for the month of February. As things happened, my column was absent from this publication in the month of January and as you know things usually happen for a reason. I felt, for the February issue, the need to write as I have done the past few years about our retired Fire Fighters who have died the year before. Having done that, now it is catch up time.

The February issue of this publication did come with a front page that hosted the pictures of our recent Fire Fighters that were lost in the month of February, Grady, Kim and Lewis.

That is what prompted me to write in this issue about another Fire Fighter who died in the month of February.

The Fire Fighter that I refer to died on Valentine's Day in 1921. This was a fact that was not uncovered until March of 2000. The discovery was contained in a scrap book originally owned by Chief Grover Adams, whose career spanned 45 years beginning in 1915 and ending in 1960. The scrapbook was in the possession of a nephew and the first we knew about its existence was in 1987. Well things happened and the scrap book did not turn up until 14 years later.

This newly found scrap book contained a small article about the death of a Houston Fire Fighter named, H. A. Harris. The article was dated February 15, 1921. Upon further research, I was able to find more newspaper articles (there were three daily papers in Houston at the time) and was able to tell the story of a hero who had remained nameless for 79 years.

To obtain information on H. A. "Ace" Harris please refer to my website or the "Memorial Section" in the HFD 2000 yearbook to obtain the details of his death.

A couple of years after that amazing discovery, I received an email from a woman that had found my website and found the page on H. A. Harris. She told me that H. A. Harris was her grandfather's brother and she was able to give me additional information on her relative. One of the details she gave me was that everyone called him "Ace" however none of the old folks in her family knew where this name came from.

Now in closing, for those of you that follow this column each month, know that my "M.O." is to help you all remember, a month at a time, those who came before us and made the ultimate sacrifice.

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UP COMING EVENTS AND INFORMATION

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.

Memorial web site-www.houstonfirememorial.org

This is my personal website that is also the Houston Fire Department's official memorial site. It contains listing of Houston's line-of-duty Fire Fighter deaths from when the department went paid in 1895 to 2004. I list as many Houston Fire Fighters that can be found through research that are now deceased, these are from 1895 to present. I also have, because of 911, all the Fire Fighters who died on September 11th and FDNY's line-of-duty deaths from 1865 to 2004.

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