



REMEMBERING OUR FALLEN FIRE FIGHTERS

by Scott Mellott, Retired

In my article published in the July 2006 issue, I presented an idea that concerned the helmets that are used to represent the Houston Fire Fighters that have died in the line-of-duty.

These helmets represents each of our 60 Line-of-Duty Deaths (59 paid Fire Fighters and 1 Volunteer) that have occurred since the HFD went to a paid department in 1895. The helmets would be used during the Annual Memorial Service that is held every third Saturday in March each year. The ceremony takes place at the Memorial Garden located on the grounds of the HFFP office complex.

To honor each Line-of-Duty Fire Fighter during the ceremony, the helmet is carried to the memorial wall by a uniformed Fire Fighter and placed on the wall. The Fire Fighter then steps back and salutes the helmet which honors the Fire Fighter who gave their all for the Houston Fire Department and the Citizens of Houston, Texas.

In the past, helmets were taken out of department inventory and loaned to the Memorial Service Committee for the weekend of the memorial. For the most part, they were black helmets and came with a "visor" and no helmet front piece (a helmet front is usually marked with the rank and the number of the fire station or equipment the Fire Fighter is assigned to). Because of logistics, the helmet fronts were not added and the visor was not removed thus making for row of helmets on the memorial wall that all looked identical.

Shortly after the service ended last year, I remember looking at the row of identical black helmets and said to myself "what is wrong

with this picture." A few days later, I was talking on the phone with one of my friends that I had enlisted for extra help at the service. We were talking about how things went and of course I mentioned how the row of black helmets line up on the wall could use some improvement. So from that conversation is when the idea of the now famous "Helmet Project" was born.

Once money was raised, the helmets ordered and delivered, the next item on the agenda was to have a "pre-service" group shot of all of the helmets. My partner, retired Fire Fighter Butch Edmonds, came up with the idea of placing the helmets in front of a HFD fire apparatus. The photo shoot took place on February 6th which for some reason was one of the few days of the New Year that the sun came out. We chose Fire Station 56, which happens to be where Butch's son Anthony is the Captain on Engine 56. With the help of the great crew of Station 56 A shift, we were able to take the first "group" shot of the helmets.

This brings us to the end of this story, but the beginning of a new tradition.

We would like to thank the following for help with this project:

Grover Adams, Jarrel Beard, Johnny Belin, Gary Bennett, Laval Bolling, Ben Brymer, Anthony Calagna, Roger and Sharon Campbell, Donald Clark, Howard Coates, Eddie Corral, Pat Daly, Larry Danna, Larry Dolch, Doyle Ebel, Royce Guest, Paul Hamilton, Ed Hauck, Linda Holder, Leonard Johlke, Juanita Kersten, Bruce Koger, Richard McTague J. D. Robinson, V. E. Rogers, Richard Sadler, John Slovacek, Anthony Tamborello, Jerry Walker, Arnold Whitehorn, Charlie S.Wilson, Gene Zamorsky, Citizens Fire Academy Alumni Association, Ruth Christian, William Edmonds, Sr., William Edmonds, Jr., Anthony Edmonds, Mary Edmonds, Allan Gunderson, Chris Lyons, Joe Reyes, Captain Paul Key and the Crew of Station 56/A, Local 341, the Houston Fire Department and the Houston Fire Museum.



Remembering To Never Forget

AUSTIN PEAVY KENNADA

Served HFD from 1956 to 1983

Died February 18, 2007

WILBER MARTIN JONES

Served HFD from 1945 to 1966

Died January 21, 2007

GEORGE EARL LOWDERMILK

Served HFD from 1950 to 2005

Died January 12, 2007

MAXIE GENE JONES

Served HFD from 1959 to 1979

Died February 9, 2007

JIMMY EARL LILLEY

Served HFD from 1969 to 1991

Died January 20, 2007

KENNETH RAY JUDD

Served HFD from 1963 to 1994

Died January 7, 2007

WILLIAM R. YOUNG

Served HFD from 1955 to 1976

Died February 5, 2007

LARRY ANTHONY WESLEY

Served HFD from 1979 to 2000

Died January 19, 2007

LEE DITTA

Served HFD from 1948 to 1978

Died January 1, 2007

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

Total for the year from January 1, 2007 to present - 9

LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH ANNIVERSARIES FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH:

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***

March 1, 1928

***GEORGE L. BISHOP
Captain - Station 4***

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

Please visit my personal website, the Fire Fighter Memorial website. It contains listings of Houston's line-of-duty Fire Fighters from when the department went paid in 1895 to 2004. We also list as many Houston Fire Fighters (that can be found through research) that are now deceased, from 1895 to present. We have added, because of 911, all the Fire Fighters who died on September 11th and have added a link to FDNY's line-of-duty deaths from 1865 to 2004.

Scott Mellott

Celebrating 75 Years

1932 to 2007

Houston Professional Fire Fighter's Association, Local 341

As some of you may already know, this publication will be doing a two page picture spread each month for the year 2007. We will focus on the faces of our past and the present membership to celebrate Local 341's 75th year.

Scott Mellott



Central Fire Station, 1300 Preston Avenue - 1945.

Photo furnished by the Family of Robert Edwards.



***Fire Station 21, Fire Boat -
Manchester Wharfs - early 1930's.***

Photo furnished by Clifford Malek



Fire Station 7, 2403 Milam - 1932.

Photo furnished by the Family of John Little, Sr.

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Station 34 - Barry Road and Jensen - 1971.

(L-R) Joseph F. Holman, John W. Wedgeworth, Marvin G. Kent, Arthur C. "Ace" Datry, William L. "Butch" Edmonds, Ronald "Ron" Freytag, William "Bill" Selph, Teddy Itzen, Dee Leonard.

Photo by Butch Edmonds



Station 33, 7100 Fannin - 1978.

Chief "Jimmy" Seth Jourde and Johnnie Esterak.

Photo furnished by the Family of Chief Jourde



Hal Doerre, Station 9/C fire at 1800 Congress Ave. - 1980's.

Photo by Jo L Kenner



Shamrock Hilton Fire - 1988, Mike Owin (L), Chief John Ward (R), Chief "Birdie" Thompson (background).

Photo by Jo L Kenner