



THE WATCHDESK

ANNUAL REVIEW 2020

COLLECTING + PRESERVING + EDUCATING + INTERPRETING

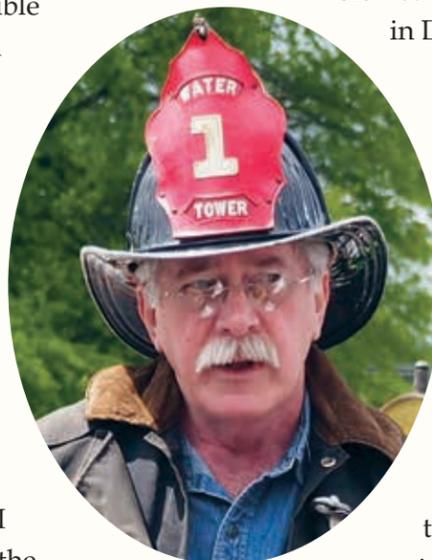


Director's Message The Watchdesk 2020

The Year 2020 will be remembered for several significant things. You are expecting me to talk about COVID-19 and so I shall. Life as we knew it was tossed on its head and we had to re-think how we do everything. Distancing from each other has been a terrible hurdle to overcome and now in November, I am still working on that skill. On the bright side, however, is the fact that we had electronic tools at our disposal and our computer-savvy comrades dragged us into Zoom and so many other things.

We have much for which to be thankful and as Thanksgiving Day approaches I would like to mention some of the special 'things' that happened at the Museum from November of 2019 to the end of October 2020.

- Closing from 17 March to 3 June gave us individually a time to evaluate and catch up;
- You who are our life-supporting friends, stepped up to the plate, and gave more generously than ever, keeping the FMM in the black, as we had lost about \$70,000 in income;
- The education department recorded stories to be shared and planned for virtual tours to come; the last three months of 2020 are packed with virtual tours;



- The volunteer staff made progress on the 1920 Seagrave pumping engine;

- The coming of the 1956 front (forward) section (37') of the fire boat 'Tommy' was slowed but the excitement of its arrival in December increases;

- A 1913 Ahrens-Fox now sits in our hallowed halls: the last one of its kind; a life-long dream of mine has been realized.

I ask you to help us as much as you are able and return a gift to the Fire Museum of Maryland at any time of the year that you read this. Watch for our library titles going on line soon, also a sales-at-the Store section of the Web site, and

especially to join in the celebration of our FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY which will kick off in September of 2021 and run until September 24th of 2022 with a party. We have added a 50th Year banner to our logo---just a subtle reminder about a big bang.



Sincerely yours,
Steve Heaver

Stephen Heaver
Director & Curator Emeritus

The Pandemic Pivot

By William P. Roulett, Assistant Director & Education Director



This year started out on a high note when we hosted the History Ablaze seminar in February, our annual recognition of the Great Baltimore Fire of 1904. One of our keynote speakers was Baltimore County Fire Department Chief Joanne R. Rund, who serves as the first woman to be permanently appointed in the position. It was an honor to have her speak this year as 2020 marks the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment, which removed the restriction of voting rights on the basis of gender. In March, just days before the COVID-19 pandemic really hit our area, we hosted our annual Family Safety Day where visitors engaged with our community partners on a range of safety and education topics. Among our 500 visitors that day was a special visit from Baltimore County Executive John Olszewski, Jr. With the onset of the pandemic, museum activities came to a screeching halt.



During the months we were closed, from mid-March through early June, the museum's staff shared virtual storytime videos, STEM activities that could be done at home, and updates to our social media platforms in an effort to continue serving our community. Much of those resources are still available on our website. As state and county restrictions eased, we were able to reopen for some summer visitation, however the future remained uncertain.

In-person visitation was very low and it was clear that we needed to offer even more virtual programs if we were going to continue serving our community. Pivoting our education programs so they could be offered over video conference applications was only possible thanks to our awesome partners. First, we worked with the Baltimore

County Department of Aging to present several of our adult outreach programs to seniors across the county. Then I began working closely with Baltimore County Public School's Office of Social Studies to reinvent our field trip.

Months of work paid off. I am so proud of the Virtual Field Trip experience we are currently presenting to students. The program features a pre-program activity, live video through the Fire Museum's spaces, images, pre-recorded videos with Baltimore City Fire Department's Lt. Shana Haughton, and a fun storytime. In addition to the history and fire safety education that our traditional field trips always provided, the Virtual Field Trip is more robust because it includes the exploration of fire service careers and expanded fire prevention content. In those ways, the virtual program is even richer than the in-person field trip could be.

By the end of the year, our Virtual Field Trips will serve more than 2,500 Baltimore-area students, which is truly amazing. The outpouring of interest from teachers is connecting us to more students than a normal year. We are only able to do this with the help of our partners at Baltimore County Public Schools, the Baltimore City Fire Department, the Maryland State Department of Education, and FM Global who provided a generous grant in support of our fire prevention education efforts.

As we look to the future, Virtual Field Trips will allow us to reach more students across a larger geographic area, even when we begin to see in-person field trips return. If you or a teacher you know are interested in learning more, contact me at education@firemuseummd.org or 410-321-7500 x102.



BIRTHDAY PARTIES & RENTALS

By Amy Landsman, Public Relations & Rentals Director



Following a strong 2019, the year 2020 started out on a very positive note for our birthday party business. From February to mid-March we held 22 parties, with solid bookings for the next few months. Unfortunately, the positive news didn't last.

As a result of the COVID quarantine, our birthday and rental business dropped to zero for April and May. Some families rescheduled for 2021, others cancelled.

Since re-opening in June, recovery has been very slow.

To put it in perspective: In 2019, we held 68 birthday parties. This year, we estimate we will only have about 30. As we wait for families to start feeling comfortable with indoor parties again, the museum has had some success with small-group or family-only birthday fire engine rides.

We are doing evening rentals, and we have some inquiries about small corporate events. For everyone's safety, masks and social distancing are required in the building.

There are a couple of bright spots. An automotive modelers group is now renting space for their monthly meetings. Plus, local artist Mary Rever is renting our Special Exhibits room for a weekly small group adult painting class. Mary offers free lessons to active military, veterans, firefighters, and other first responders. Interested in exploring your creative side? Contact Mary at artpfmv@gmail.com, or 410-591-1878.

To book a small-group or family engine ride, a birthday party, or a corporate or social evening rental, please email or call Amy at alandsman@firemuseummd.org, or 410-321-7500, x 103.



Welcome Back!

By Jessica Bentz, Store Manager



As with the rest of the world, COVID-19 had a direct impact on our beloved museum. Our doors were closed from the middle of March through the end of May. In June we were

permitted to open for the public with our normal summer hours.

We had the normal summer attractions such as Wednesday STEAM activities, story time, and our Fire Rescue game. By normal, I mean as scheduled and planned but with accommodations for health and safety.

Obviously, masks and social distancing are required in the Museum. A positive accommodation is the plastic fire helmets each child now receives free with admission. Even the "big kids" enjoy wearing a helmet.

While we were fortunate to open our doors this summer, we couldn't have done so without public support. Our visitors have been so kind to support our museum store, often acknowledging the need for the extra support. One father even let his daughters choose a treat each week.

As part of our accommodations for health and safety, you can now shop for select items from our Museum store at: FireMuseumMD.org.

You can find our t-shirts, books, and patches online by visiting our website. So please check us out today!



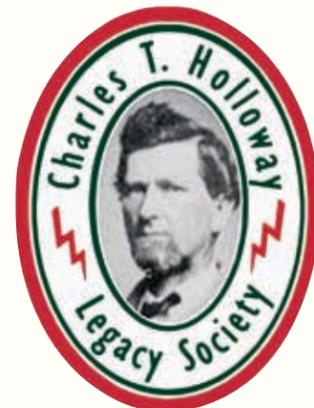
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BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

JOIN THE HOLLOWAY LEGACY SOCIETY! Help us plan for the future of the Fire Museum by leaving cash or property to the Museum. Your lawyer can make a Codicil to your Will making your intent known to help the Fire Museum of Maryland. Such gifts can offset estate taxes and ease the burden on survivors.

We are available to discuss ideas.



FIREBOAT BRINGS COMMUNITY STORIES TO LIGHT

By E. M. Kelso



For the last year the Museum has been working with our “Tommy Partners” to bring the Baltimore City Fireboat Mayor Thomas D’Alesandro Jr. to the Museum.

It has been a very exciting year of hands on work, fundraising, and forming partnerships with companies and organizations. As of the printing of this article significant work has been done to ready the boat for transportation to the Museum. Working with the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades (IUPAT) and Iron Workers Local 5 we have

prepped the Tommy for needed work and repairs, as well as transport. IUPAT has handled all the lead abatement and painting to ensure that Tommy not only looks its best, but is safe for our visitors. The Iron Workers have helped to make this work easier by cutting the house structure free from the deck to be set to the side. This made it easier for the IUPAT volunteers to do their job as well as being necessary for its eventual drive up the beltway to the Museum. In late October 2020 they will also begin making repairs to the hull and house structure, as well as some necessary modifications for the Museum. We have several “Tommy Partners” helping with a multitude of things of whom are listed later.

While adding this amazing piece of apparatus to the collection (and changing the face of our Museum) the Tommy has begun to share its nearly 60 years of personal stories with us. At first it was learning about the boats name sake, Mayor Thomas D’Alesandro Jr. He was a U.S. Congressman for Maryland Dist. 3 (1939-1947), and Mayor of Baltimore from 1947-1959. During this time the fire service in Baltimore was desegregated. His son Tommy D’Alesandro III was Mayor of Baltimore from 1967-1971 during the Baltimore riot of 1968, and his daughter is House Speaker Nancy Pelosi who is also one of the projects largest donors. The Tommy being in service from 1956-2015 will allow us to explore some important stories for visitors to the Museum.

Another such story is that of Captain Edward H. Collic, Sr. the first African-American Pilot in the Baltimore Fireboat Service. While desegregation of the Fire Department was official in 1953 it took many years to change people’s outlook. Capt. Collic was repeatedly told he could never be a pilot of a fireboat, and actively discouraged from attempting to do so. Nevertheless, he persevered and in 1974 he acquired his Coast Guard Master’s License which enabled him to become the City’s first African-American fireboat Pilot. “If you want to find a way, you will. If you want to find an excuse, you will” said Capt. Edward H. Collic. He would go onto pilot several of Baltimore City’s Fireboats including the Tommy.

Mayor Thomas D’Alesandro Jr and family. Speaker Nancy Pelosi seated in the back.



International Union of Painters and Allied Trades



Iron Workers Local 5



Captain Edward H. Collic viewing the Tommy work site.



Iron Workers prepare to lift off the housing structure



Our Museum is much more than a Museum of fire apparatus. We continue to innovate and add personal stories to our exhibits to enrich our visitors' experiences. Another one of these stories from the fireboat will be that of Captain James William Smith. He was in the Baltimore Fire Department and Capt. of the Tommy for a number of years. Throughout his years of service he developed a passion for the fireboats, particularly the Tommy. Sadly, like so many of our brave firefighters, he developed cancer and passed away March 29, 2012 leaving behind a wife and two daughters. His legacy and knowledge live on through the John R. Frazier (BCFD's first Hazardous materials vessel) that he helped to design, his archive of Chesapeake Bay and fire service related materials (cared for by the Baltimore & Chesapeake Steamboat Co.), and now through the Tommy itself. It has been a privilege

and an honor to come to know his family over the course of this project who are also donors.

In October 2020 we break ground on the foundation for the Tommy at the Museum, and we hope to have delivery of the vessel by December or early next year. Over the next several years the boat will be restored inside and out. Visitors will eventually be able to stroll along the deck, tour the restored wheelhouse, and take in various exhibits that will be on display in the deckhouse, (This space will serve as a rotating exhibit space for the Museum). The boat will be brought back to life with restored lighting, and on special days we will flow water through her monitors once again!

We hope that you are following our project on Facebook and GoFundMe, and we hope to have your financial support as we progress into Phase-2 of the Tommy Project.



Captain James William Smith

Special Thanks to Our Tommy Partners and Donors

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Amazon Smile isn't a substitute for the generous donations that help us keep our doors open. It's that nice something extra that goes to the museum for all that online shopping we're doing so much of these days anyway. The website is "smile.amazon.com."

-Amy Landsman,

Membership & Media Relations Director



WEDDINGS—CORPORATE EVENTS—DAY/EVENING RENTALS



Amy Landsman
Rentals Coordinator
(410) 321-7500 x103
FireMuseumMD.org/rentals

A New Treasure Arrives!

by Stephen Heaver, Director & Curator Emeritus

The name 'Ahrens-Fox' conjures up images of great fire engines: motor pumping cars, to be exact. Engines with nickel or chrome plated pressure domes slugging great quantities of water to high pressure pipes or clutches of fire fighters standing in front of roaring flames. To some it is the 'Rolls Royce' of fire engines. To others 'Ahrens-Fox' is simply a complicated, hyphenated name. On whichever side of this line you fall, please take note: the arrival of this machine is cause for celebration. It has been moved from a private garage in Ohio to a premier museum where it can be studied and enjoyed. Built in 1913 it represents the pre-eminent pumping engine prior to World War I. It reveals how the designers of the day solved problems of pumping water with a gasoline engine, and actually, how the internal combustion engine, per se, operated internally and ultimately, how a wagon moved over the streets without horses!

Fire Departments struggled with all of these questions as their chiefs made decisions about the future safety of their communities. Insurance companies, such as the Fire Underwriters'



'H' and surrounding area cleaned of dirty varnish revealing the bright red background which matches the rest of the red paint.



'Pencil Scroll' from the hose bed.

Laboratories, compiled data and arranged contests between fire engine manufacturers to see whose product was most long-lasting while pumping, or could climb a hill, or throw water the farthest. These results were assiduously studied by F.D. specification committees.

Ahrens had been a leader in the steam pumping engine field for decades and it proved to be a leader in gasoline engine experiments. I have yet to read an inventor's notes from 1910-11, but we can safely start with the concept of two slowly moving (r.p.m.(revolutions per minute)=150) steam pistons driving two opposed water pistons (also at the same r.p.m.). From that point their design engineers had to translate a steam engine into a gasoline engine with 6 pistons moving over a crank that was rotating about 900 r.p.m. Transmissions needed to be invented to convert this power. Power required a forced lubrication system and other auxiliaries. Ahrens-Fox stayed with a piston water pump while American-LaFrance adopted a rotary pump and Seagrave developed a centrifugal pump. And so on.

While we are thinking about how the machinery is going to work, consider how we are going to train a totally new labor force that is sympathetic to gasoline-fueled, internal combustion engines.



Josiah Wagener cleaning on the third day. The top of the hood was painted in factory red enamel as a later repair.

At the time of the Great Baltimore Fire in 1904 there were six automobiles in the city, no gasoline stations and thousands of horses.

Jumping ahead now to No.526, our A-F from Courthouse, Ohio (near Cincinnati), is almost totally original. We are thrilled to be able to share this magnificent machine in all its glory; please come for a visit! Let's go back to June of 2020 when my bid was accepted by Frank Snyder. By July I was making plans to move it here with Ted Elder, John Zangerle, Eric Kelso, Lee Smith and other key players. On Sunday the 23rd of August two cars left from Baltimore and the hauling rig left from Columbus, all to converge in Celina, Ohio, on Monday. We met the man who had preserved it all these years, Frank Snyder, and walked into his garage to formulate plans. There were about ten people so the Fox was easy

to push out into the sunlight where dozens of photographs were taken and Christmas came early this year!

The trip to Lutherville (Baltimore) went smoothly putting us at the Museum after supper on Tuesday August 25th. Wednesday dawned bright and clear with a team of helpers coming along to start the enormous job of cleaning the beast. It hadn't been dusted, much less nickel polished, for over 40 years. The excitement of seeing such a rare piece was enormous and I was thankful for a calm sunny day to facilitate the cleaning. This came with a double-edged sword, as it were, because the paint was in such delicate condition. Every effort was made to not touch the paint on the sheet metal. Some of the paint had already been lost from the vibration of driving from Ohio. It seems that A-F had decided to eliminate the lead primer customarily laid down before the color coats were applied. We will chalk this decision up to part of the 1913 experiment.

Plans for this amazing and unique vehicle are simple: keep it as it is; avoid changes; maintain and preserve the paint, nickel and machinery. The staff has started to polish the original nickel



Name plate on the right side showing year, model and serial number, all hand engraved then filled with black enamel.

Wednesday's cleaning extraordinaire. Also experimental is its very low center of gravity.



which, for the most part, has responded well. In some cases, it still has a brilliant shine. Met-All The German silver radiator shell is being cleaned with a silver polish. The pump gauges were illuminated by a contoured lamp. We have the original lamp shade but the associated piping and tubing broke off many years ago so we are fabricating these parts and will leave them in brass and copper finishes.

We want to run this machine long enough to make a video of it being cranked and then running. Ted

Elder has been investigating the ignition system and starter and as of this writing, we got it to run about eight coughs. There are three systems: a battery vibrator that should fire it up without using any moving parts, and two magnetos. The original starter was removed in 1938 and not replaced. So guess what? We take turns cranking! All early gasoline engines had cranks suitable for starting because the batteries were unreliable (another experimental aspect).

The paint and decoration is a major component of any fire apparatus and due to the delicacy of this finish, I felt that a professional conservator would be needed. Josiah Wagener of Carlisle, Pa., is an old friend of the Museum and he agreed to put us on his schedule for late October. I am pleased to share photos with you. He has uncovered the original color and decorations on the hood, body and wheels by removing the dirty varnish, Q-tip

by Q-tip, just like oil paintings are cleaned at the Walters Art Museum.

I invite you to come for a visit. Drop in on a Saturday several times so that you can watch the progress being made on the 1913 Ahrens-Fox's appearance. You won't be disappointed! We have A-F tee shirts in our Store or buy on-line via the web site: firemuseummd.org.

Advertising and Promotions

By Amy Landsman,
Public Relations & Rentals Director

The Museum may have been closed to the public this spring, but we still kept in touch with our friends and supporters through regular emails and Facebook posts. This allowed us to maintain our connections with the public and let them know what was going on, even if it was on a limited basis.

During the quarantine, families could enjoy video story times courtesy of our Education Department. Also, the museum brought an engine to support a community food drive in Lutherville, and our engine and staff took part in a neighborhood parade in Towson in honor of medical workers and first responders.

We also created a large banner for the museum that showcased photos of first responders from Howard County cleaning and disinfecting emergency vehicles and suiting up in protective gear.



This summer, musician Matt Mazur, along with performers Dan and Claudia Zanes, headlined a family-friendly livestream from right here in the Museum.

Our main York Road sign has been relocated to the front of the museum. We purchased six temporary “museum open” signs we can put out on days we’re open. We’re hopeful that we will have a new sign on York Road sometime in the future.



In May, the Blue Angels and Thunderbirds flew right over the museum. Spectators gathered in the parking lot to watch the display and it made for some great photos.

Do we have your email?

Do we have your email? The Fire Museum uses email as a quick and lower-cost way to keep in touch with our friends and supporters. If you haven't been receiving our emails, please email Amy at

alandsman@firemuseummd.org
and we will add you to our list.

A large banner for 'Scout Overnights' at the Fire Museum of Maryland. The banner features a red fire truck with a yellow banner that says '50 YEARS'. A young boy in a blue and red scout uniform is smiling and pointing at a sign that reads 'ALL SCOUT PROGRAMS ARE FOLLOWING THE SCOUTING COVID UNIT GUIDE ALONG WITH NATIONAL, STATE, AND LOCAL GUIDELINES.' The text 'Scout Overnights' is in large blue letters at the top. Below it, 'Cub Scouts' and 'Scouts BSA' are written in white. On the right, it says 'Call Eric Kelso (410) 321-7500 x106'. The Fire Museum of Maryland logo is in the center, featuring a fire truck and the text 'FIRE MUSEUM OF MARYLAND'.

Staff Spotlight on: **Ed Burgee, Collections Technician**



After retiring in 2011 after serving 44 years in the fire service (35 years paid and the rest volunteer) I thought I never wanted to see another fire engine again. When you have something like the fire service in your blood, however, it does not leave you upon retirement; it remains for life. With that being said I walked into the Fire Museum in the summer of 2016 and asked Steve if he could use a retired "hose jockey." Steve had never heard of that term, but welcomed me aboard anyway.

My first task was polishing the brass on our 1898 Hale Water Tower; a veteran of the Great Baltimore Fire of 1904. The Tower was quite tarnished and covered with water spots from use at our annual Steam Day several months before. After about 3 days of rubbing my fingers to the bone the thought crossed my mind 'What am I doing here?!' I persevered at my task, however,



and after completion I stepped back to take in the whole picture. All I could say was "Wow, that looks great and I did it!"

I have been hooked ever since and now take care of the entire collection as an integral member of the Curatorial Team.

The museum showcases fire apparatus from 1806 until 1957. After all the years I served in the motorized and ever-increasing technical era, I naturally gravitated to the earlier hand drawn and horse drawn period. It's easy to think of the past as the good old days when things were simpler and less hectic. The truth is, all periods of time have their crises and always have. I enjoy the earlier periods here at the museum for the visual beauty of the various pieces - and they truly are works of art - as well as for the colorful stories associated with this period of time.

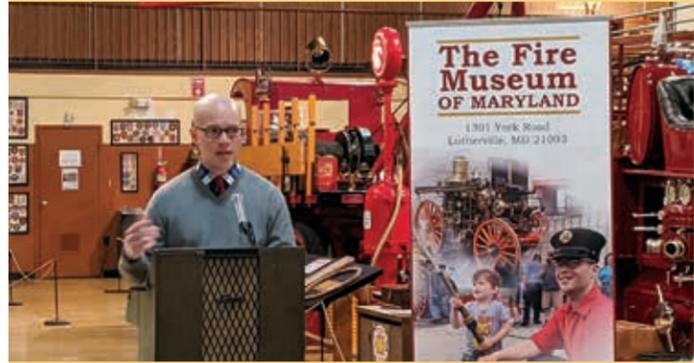
It has been very enlightening learning the older technologies and intricacies of the hand pumpers and steamers. Having been a pump operator for most of my career I thought it would be an easy transition to move to the operation of a horse-drawn steamer. How wrong I was. The theory behind how they work is easy, but the practical operation takes much time and practice to master and maybe one day I will.

My tasks here at the museum are varied and I have learned much since I started and continue to learn all the time. I consider it an honor to be able to take care of this wonderful collection and help to pass it on to future generations. Come join our Volunteer Team!



HISTORY ABLAZE!

Great Baltimore Fire Event 2020



Family Safety Day 2020



ANTIQUE AUTOMOBILE CLUB OF AMERICA SHOW



Motor Muster: Honoring Our Heros



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LANTERN NIGHT 2019



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Emeritus

Melissa M. Heaver

Registrar & Archivist

Emeritis

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Asst. Director &

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Duty Officer

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Fire Alarm Operator

Tom Miller

Fire Alarm Operator

2021 SPECIAL EVENTS

February 7th - History Ablaze!

March 6th – Family Safety Day / FREE

May 1st – 43rd Annual Steam Show / FREE

July 10th – Antique Car Show

September 11th – Honoring our Heroes Motor Muster & a Salute to Seagrave / FREE

October 23rd – Lantern Night

November 27th – Holiday Train Garden Opens

See website and Social Media for details

410-321-7500 • www.firemuseummd.org