



The TRUMPET

A PERIODIC PUBLICATION FOR THE MEMBERS OF
THE CONNECTICUT FIREMEN'S HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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September 2023



Company No. 1's 1899 ladder truck with horses Jim and Charlie in a two-horse hitch. Unknown photographer, taken from Hose Co. 1 scrapbooks.

From the President Wayne Crossman

Hello Society members and friends. We are quickly coming to the end of another successful season of operation for the Fire Museum. The annual meeting will be held on October 21, and we will close for the season on November 11.

Many improvements have been made this year, including a major renovation of the library. This task was taken on by Jim Brown, Rob Palmer, Steve Brunelle, and Lenny Luzusky. The storage area was

expanded, and new file cabinets were installed. Book racks were moved, and lighting fixtures were improved. The collection of books and printed material was evaluated by Board members. Some items not relevant to Connecticut history were donated to the National Fire Heritage Society in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Rob and Steve have been working on accessioning the items that we have received recently and transferring all accessioned items to a new program. This program is much easier to use than the Past Perfect program we have been using. The basement storage area is also receiving a general cleanup and organization. Once the basement

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cleaning is finished the floor in the old bowling area will be repaired and storage racks will be added. New stanchions for signage has been crafted by Jim Brown using some of our collection of play pipe nozzles.

The next large undertaking will be discussions with the Town of Manchester on repairs to the exterior of the building. The building needs repainting, the siding needs repair in some areas, and parts of the roof and gutters need repair. We hope some of this work can be completed while we are closed for the season.

Background History of the “Hand-Carved” Chairs.

Arthur Selleck

If you knew Arthur Selleck, you know what a story teller he was. And if you received a book or a photograph from him you probably found a typed note attached to the back with all the information he could find on the subject. We're still finding those notes, and they're often a great help guiding our research. The following is a note he left in the files with all the information they had on the three beautiful officers' chairs on display in the Connecticut Room Gallery.

“We do not know where these chairs were made, or who made them but we do know that they came from Oswego, N.Y., not Oneonta, as some of us believed.

In September of 1961 Chief John D. Murray, of Oswego, wrote to one Ken Robinson, an avid collector in Peekskill, N.Y., that his department wanted to sell the three chairs and that a local antique dealer had offered them \$100 for all three! The chief felt that he would rather the chairs go to someone interested in the fire service rather than a dealer and preferably to one out of town. Chief Murray must have known Ken Robinson and that he was a collector. Robinson felt that he did not have the room for them and referred the offer to his good friend, Clarence Baldwin in Milford, CT, who on September 15th agreed to take them for the stated price. They were in Clarence's possession for 15 years until his death in May 1976.

Apparently Clarence had the chairs re-upholstered, although he never told us so. They came into the Society's possession after Clarence Baldwin's estate was probated.

They are indeed a work of art. The original letter from Chief Murray said that they were about 115 years old (in 1961) which would make them 141 years old in 1987; therefore we show them as Ca 1845!”



Hand-carved officers' chairs on display in the second floor Connecticut Room Gallery. Photograph Lucy Crossman

The following is an article we found in the February 22, 1900 issue of the Boston Daily Globe

John S. Jones An Honored Connecticut Fireman Westport Fire Dept.

Forty-three years an active fireman, and still in the department, is the record of John S. Jones, whose portrait is to be seen on this page. Mr. Jones was the organizer, in 1857, of the first fire company in the town of Westport, Conn., the birthplace of that gentleman. He was its first foreman, and held that office for nearly twenty years, and the company never held a meeting for forty-three years but the name of Mr. Jones has been first heard in the calling of the roll. When the Westport fire department was first organized he was selected as its chief engineer, a position he held for fifteen years, and until he resigned and declined a re-election last year. When the Connecticut State Firemen's Association was organized he was one of the original members, and was elected secretary at the first meeting, and has been re-elected for sixteen consecutive years, and is still in that position, which shows conclusively the esteem in which he is held by the firemen of the Nutmeg State.

He has been a member of the International Association of Fire Engineers since 1885, and has been vice-president of the same. There are probably but few



John S. Jones
Secretary Connecticut Association

firemen in the country better known than Mr. Jones. Although former Chief Jones' department is small (numbering five companies, all of whom, from the chief to the youngest hose boy, are volunteers) and does not have a large number of fires, still the general inspector of fire underwriters speaks well of its management and efficiency. Mr. Jones combines the dual characteristics of editor and fireman, he being the editor and proprietor of the *Westporter-Herald*, which is the official organ of the State Association.

Mr. Jones is a prominent figure in his native town, having been postmaster, president of the board of trade, clerk of probate for twenty-five years, and filled other prominent positions. He is a life-long member of the Episcopal Church, and for twenty-eight years was clerk of the parish of the Memorial Church of the Holy Trinity, and for eleven years its junior warden. He is one of the originators and the only

**The last open day of
the 2023 season will
be Saturday Nov. 11.**

secretary ever chosen of the Westport Water and Electric Light Company. He has also held the position of president of the Connecticut Editorial Association and is still an active member of the organization, and has represented it in the National Association. He was secretary of the board of Connecticut State commissioners at the Atlanta Exposition in 1895, and was reappointed by Governor Coffin to serve in a like position at the Tennessee exposition in 1897. He was one of the charter members of the State Firemen's Association in 1885, and, having always been its secretary, has served under twelve different presidents, all of whom admit to be the best informed of any of its members as to the affairs of the organization from its infancy to the present time, and the great and good work which has been and is being accomplished in behalf of the firemen of the State, and their families is attributable to the efforts of Mr. Jones, who devotes more than three-quarters of his time to his office as secretary.



Guests attending Kevin McKeon's book signing Aug. 5.
Photograph by Lucy Crossman



Kevin McKeon and Jacquie Donavan greet some old friends at his book signing at the Fire Museum August 5.

Kevin McKeon Book Signing August 5, 2023

The Society was pleased to host a book signing event for Kevin McKeon on August 5 at the Museum. Kevin has been traveling throughout Connecticut over the past forty-plus years photographing fire apparatus. This quest has resulted in him producing six separate volumes of fire photos and stories.

Kevin's newest, Volume 3 of "The Connecticut Fire Service Experience", is his final publication. Many of our members and members of the fire service know Kevin and most of them have been written about in at least one of his books. Kevin's first two publications were photo albums of fire apparatus and as Kevin traveled around the state he made many friends many of whom are profiled in this volume.

Volume 3 is divided into the eight counties of Connecticut and Kevin spotlights several fire departments in each county. Along the way Kevin asked people to record their experience in the fire service. Many of these reminiscences are by some of the icons of Connecticut's fire service - firefighters, Chiefs, mentors, instructors, and characters. It's a great compilation of photographs and stories, and the Society applauds Kevin on this tremendous accomplishment. We can't wait to see what he comes up with for his next chapter.

Kevin very generously donated a case of Volume 3 to the Fire Museum for sale in our museum store. We also have a limited number of his first two volumes, which are out of print, available in the store.

The Horses of Hose and Ladder Co. No. 1

The following is a short article taken from a December 1902 edition of the Hartford Courant, with additional information found in the South Manchester Fire Department 100 Anniversary Book.

"The daily drills of the horses of Hose and Ladder Company No. 1 have brought them to a degree of perfection that equals that of the horses of the city departments. These horses were first stabled in the fire station July 3, 1901, when the house was formally opened. Jim and Charlie, as they were named, were then over 17 years of age and had always been used by Cheney Brothers for heavy teaming. Prince, another team horse, 10 years old, but heavier than the others, was assigned to the hose wagon. The sound of the gong at first startled them and so did the falling of the harnesses on their backs, but it was not long before at the sound of the gong they would dash to their places as soon as the stall doors swung open. Every night when the test alarm is sounded they are always ready for the drill.

With the men of Company No. 1 they are great pets and, although advanced in years, have learned petty tricks. One is the habit of chewing tobacco, and each night after they have run into place when the test alarm sounds and the drill is finished they are given a chew by the men at their heads. It is not necessary that there be any particular quality about the tobacco, but rather quantity, as may be judged from the fact that after a recent drill Prince contented himself with a whole paper of smoking tobacco. Prince is of a sorrel color and weighs 2800 pounds. They have been trained mostly by John Freney, Leon Dupont and William Madden, who sleep in the station, and also by Lewis N. Heebner, the superintendent of the fire alarm system."

In response to an article published in 1907 regarding availability of the horses during the day when they were working the mills, members of the Hose Company assured residents that the horses were always "within a minute or two of the house as they are used around the silk mills." But a story appeared in the paper the next year: "No. 1's hose house is but a stones throw from the scene of the fire but it was some time before they got the first stream working, as the horses which draw the chemical and hose wagon were up on School Street."

2023
Annual Meeting and Reception

Saturday October 21

The Fire Museum
230 Pine Street
Manchester, CT

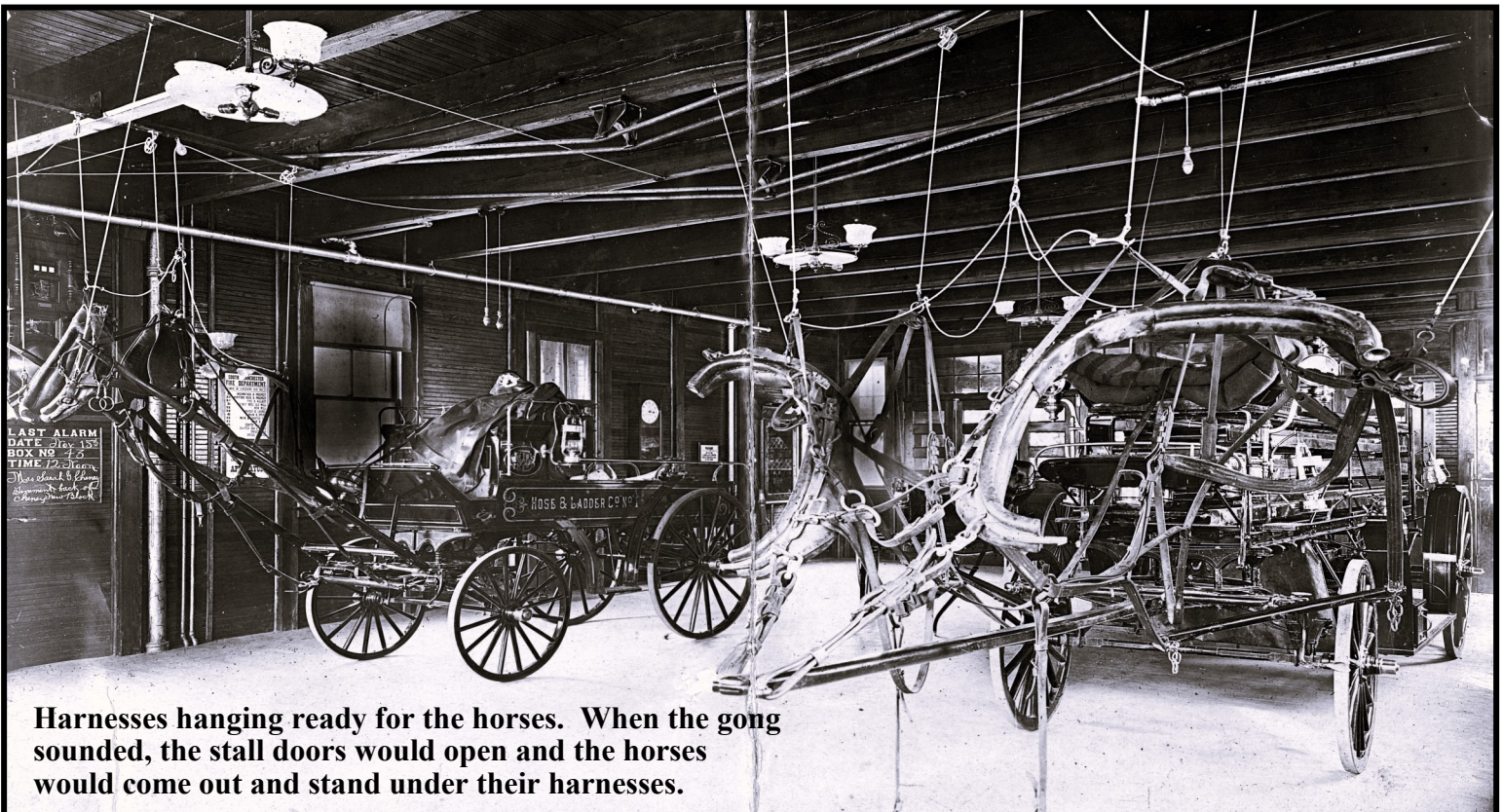
Annual Meeting at 4:15 p.m.
Wine and Cheese Reception Immediately After
Light Refreshments

Officers for 2024

| | |
|----------------|------------------|
| President | Wayne Crossman |
| V. President | Steve Brunelle |
| Secretary | Lucy Crossman |
| Treasurer | Henry R. Palmer |
| Corr Secretary | Laurette Luzusky |

Trustees for 3-year terms

| |
|----------------|
| Wayne Crossman |
| James Brown |
| Justin Ford |
| Mark Redman |



Harnesses hanging ready for the horses. When the gong sounded, the stall doors would open and the horses would come out and stand under their harnesses.



Hose Co. 1's first ladder truck..



Steve Ling takes the cadets through the history of fire apparatus from hand pumps to steam.



Lenny Luzusky explains the workings of the alarm room to one of the groups of CFA Cadets this summer.



Top.. Steve Brunelle and (bottom) Jim Brown share the history of our firehouse with ITTFS Cadets this summer.



1907 Chemical and Hose Wagon purchased for \$2000 from the Combination Ladder Company of Providence, RI. In addition to 200 feet of 3/4" hose for the chemical tanks, it carried 1,000 feet of 2 1/2" hose, a ladder, lanterns, extinguishers and tools.





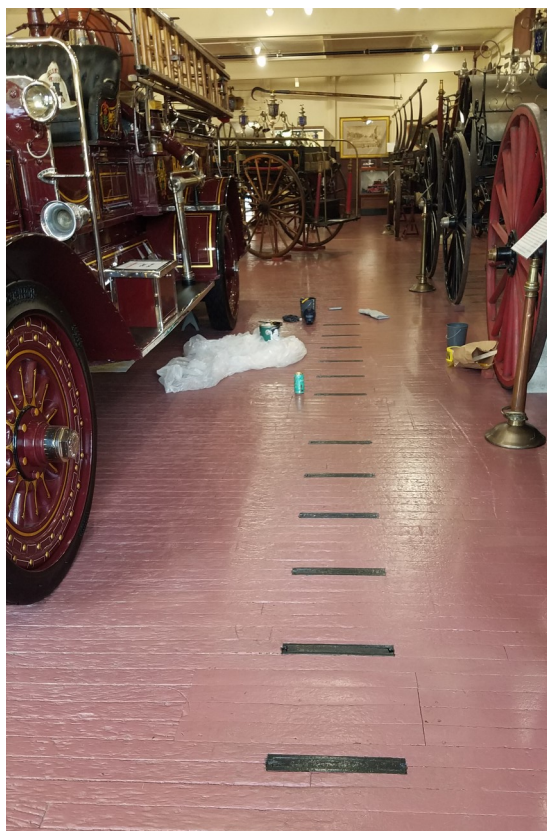
One of the small projects we completed this summer was painting the rest of the roller blocks on the main apparatus floor. In the winter the wheels on the wagons would be replaced with sled runners and the wooden blocks in the floor would be replaced with metal rollers to facilitate “rolling” the wagons back into the firehouse.



1906 Seagrave Hook and Ladder truck purchased for \$2500. It had running boards on each side to accommodate a dozen men and carried eleven ladders of various lengths.



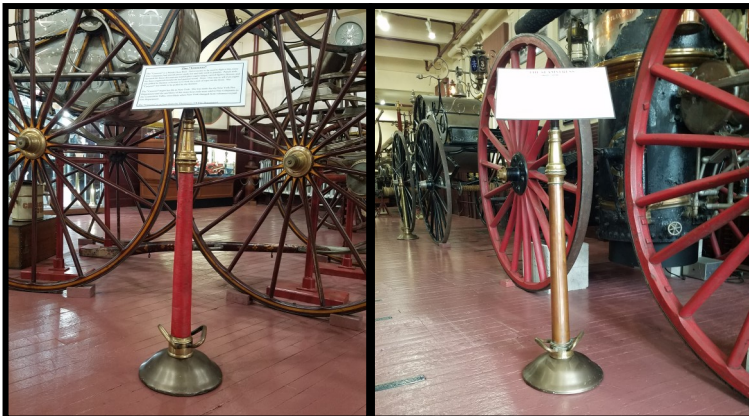
Jonathan Humble with a group of ITTFS Cadets in the Hartford Road Bay with Hartford Tower 1 and the 1921 Ahrens Fox.



In This Issue

Horses of Hose Co. 1, Kevin McKeon Book Signing, John S. Jones, Annual Meeting

We've been talking about developing new signage for the exhibits for some time now. Being a kind of small space we wanted something that wouldn't be intrusive. Then we were given a collection of play pipes. Was there a way we could use them and they could be part of the display? We had a couple dozen brass stanchions downstairs that we weren't using, and Jim Brown discovered he could take them apart, place the nozzle on the base, add a short pipe, elbow, and flange to the top, and we had a new sign stanchion!! We're working on a new medium for the signs, and we're going to include a QR Code for further information. We were looking for something that would be part of the exhibit, and a little different. Note: no nozzles were harmed in any way - one twist at the top and it all comes apart, and we have a useful way to display the different nozzles!



Above, the first class of ITTFS cadets from the Fire Academy toured the Museum June 30. Below, the second class on July 21.

