

UNION HISTORICAL FIRE SOCIETY



DELAWARE VALLEY CHAPTER S.P.A.A.M.F.A.A.

Merry Christmas

from the President and Executive Council

I would like to thank the vendors and buyers who filled out our 2023 Spring Melt survey forms. Our goal was to find a balance between the vendors and the buyers to ensure the longevity of the show. The Spring Melt committee has reviewed all the forms and will be implementing a few changes to the 2024 Spring Melt.

I would also like to personally thank the Executive Council for bringing The Society into the 21st century. We have made quite a few changes, not all of them favorable but all positive again to ensure our longevity. With that, we will add to next year's focus the planning of our 50th Anniversary. The Executive Council welcomes all suggestions.

The Annual Meeting of the Members will be held via ZOOM on Sunday, January 14th, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. A link will be sent to member's email so you can join and vote for the 2024 Officers and Executive Council. The 2024 Budget will also be presented at that time.

Happy Holidays to you and your loved ones.
President E. Tickner



Matt Brinkman was the drawing winner of the Distillery Tour and Tasting in the historic Humane Engine #1 Firehouse at Five Saints Distilling in Norristown, PA. The tour included both the first floor distillery and the original firehouse collection located on the second floor. The company was organized in 1852.



WWW.UNIONHISTORICALFIRESOCIETY.COM

2024

ALLENTOWN SPRING MELT

The nation's premier fire memorabilia
auction and marketplace.

SAVE THE DATE

Auction

Sat. April 20

Marketplace

Sun. April 21

Agri-Plex at Allentown Fairgrounds
302 N. 17th Street
Allentown, PA 18104



SCAN ME



ALLENTOWN SPRING MELT



Show is hosted by the Union Historical Fire Society
NATION'S PREMIER FIRE MEMORABILIA SHOW
Over 300 vendor spaces available offering:

Gamewell & Fire Alarm Parts
Prints & Artwork
T-Shirts & Jackets
Badges & Ribbons
Radio Equipment
Presentation items
Lanterns
Helmets
Antique Apparatus Parts



Photos & Postcards
Lights & Sirens
Models, Kits & Toys
Fire Buckets & Extinguishers
Vintage & Used Bunker Gear
Hose & Nozzles
EMS Equipment
Books & Manuals
Who knows what you will find!

ONLINE VENDOR REGISTRATION

STARTS JAN 14, 2024



The 35th Annual FIREMATIC ANTIQUE AUCTION

SATURDAY APRIL 20, 2024

8:00 AM START TIME

FRIDAY PREVIEW 12-3 PM

SATURDAY PREVIEW 7-8 AM



Accepting new vendors, email us at springmelt.UHFS@gmail.com



ADA Accessible
Free Parking
Food Available onsite

www.unionhistoricalfiresociety.com

IN MEMORY OF OUR PAST MEMBERS



Robert Craig "Junior" Glass Jr., passed away peacefully, on Sunday October 29, 2023, at Suburban Woods Health & Rehabilitation Center in East Norriton, PA. He was 59 years old. He served in the U.S. Marines for 4 years and then worked as a Fireman at the Montgomery Hose and Norris Fire stations in Norristown for 23 years. He enjoyed traveling with his parents and acquiring his many, many collectibles. He was a devoted son and enjoyed going down to Ocean Pines, MD to spend time with his parents at their home there.

Born on January 20, 1964, in Norristown, PA, he was the son of the late Robert Craig and Karolyn P. (Pass) Glass Sr. Robert is survived by his many friends, cousins and his beloved dog Pebbles.



Donald Ebert Gray, born December 30, 1952, in Wooster, OH, passed away Monday, October 9, 2023 at 7:50 PM surrounded by loved ones at Cleveland Clinic Akron General Hospital.

Don served Saint Paul's Lutheran Church as a councilman and usher, he was on the board of the Golden Circle Credit Union, an active member of the Northeastern Ohio Live Steamers and the Jackson Polar Bear Alumni Association. He also attended the monthly Timken Faircrest Steel Plant Retiree's Breakfast.

Don was preceded in death by his parents, Francis and Mildred Gray. Don will be remembered by his beloved wife, and best friend of nearly 50 years, Kim E. Gray and their two children, Jessica Gray and Amanda Gray; his two beloved grandchildren, Kaylee and Kyler Gray; his brother, Stephen (Barbara) Gray; along with his nieces and nephews, extended family, and his abundance of friends, for Don truly never met a stranger.

UNION HISTORICAL FIRE SOCIETY
ALLENTOWN SPRING MELT 2024 AUCTION and VENDOR INFORMATION

AUCTION

DATE: THE 2024 AUCTION IS PRESENTED BY THE EASTMERE FIREMAN
Friday April 19th Preview 12 – 3 PM
Saturday April 20th Preview 7 - 8 AM Auction begins promptly at 8 AM
For additional information contact:
Brian Enterline at (717) 648-4458 or email: brian@eastmerefireman.com

MARKETPLACE

DATE: Sunday April 21, 2024
7 - 9 AM Early Buyer Passes
9 - 2 PM General Admission

VENDOR CHECK-IN: All Vendors must check-in with Tom or Cheryl D’Arcangelo at the main entrance PRIOR to any drop off or set-up. Vendor/helper badges must be worn and visible at all times. Each space is entitled to one vendor and one helper badge. Each additional space(s) will receive one helper badge.

VENDOR DROP OFF: **NO VEHICLES will be permitted in the Main Hall during drop off / set up.**
Handcarts are permitted. Vehicles & trailers will be limited to the Auction Hall.
Drop off only, NO set up. Vendor merchandise should be covered.
Drop off times: Friday April 19th 12 - 3 PM and Saturday April 20th 10 - 2 PM
Overnight security with cameras provided.

VENDOR SET-UP: **NO VEHICLES will be permitted in the Main Hall during drop off / set up.**
Handcarts are permitted. Vehicles & trailers will be limited to the Auction Hall.
Saturday April 20th 3 – 6 PM *Early Buyers admitted at 3 PM
Overnight security with cameras provided.
Sunday April 21st 6:30 – 9 AM *Early Buyers admitted at 7 AM

DISCLAIMER: Disclaimer: Vendors/helpers at the Allentown Spring Melt accept full responsibility for any injury or loss to themselves or their property, however such injury or loss shall occur. Vendors/helpers expressly release the UHFS and staff from liability for injury and loss. Vendors/helpers signify their acceptance of these conditions by registering for vendor space(s).

NO CARBON TETRACHLORIDE GRENADES WILL BE PERMITTED INSIDE THE HALL

BREAKDOWN: Sunday April 21st beginning at 2 PM – building MUST be cleared by 5 PM.
Vehicles permitted inside after 3 PM as space allows.

CANCELLATION POLICY: **NO** refund of vendor fees 30 days before show. Prior to 30 days, 50% of fees are refundable.

DIRECTIONS: For directions visit www.allentownfair.com under General Information

We are obligated to advise you that vendors selling at this Marketplace should have a PA Sales Tax Number
For Information www.revenue.pa.gov - Sales and Use Tax
If you apply for a Transient Vendor Certificate – use UHFS Promoter ID No. 23-2017520

<https://unionhistoricalfiresociety.com/>

History of The Fire Horse

By David Traiforos

As it has been recorded from stories told about the many horses found in the firehouse, that they were often considered part of the family. This story will be no different except to tell you what was recorded and know more about the Fire Horses.

For most of our early history, the human need for the horse was a tangible part of the workforce. From plowing fields to being a major source of transportation, the horse was used to help develop modern civilization. One such use of the horse was pulling the apparatus for fire departments. They became the firefighters' trusted partners.

Duty

The period from the Civil War to the early 1920s could be known in firefighting as the era of the fire horse. Prior to that, humans pulled the apparatus and wagons that transported the water tanks, ladders and equipment — a very hard job based on the manpower available, to pulling the apparatus, to the weight of the apparatus. It was an enormous job.

Before the modernizations of the 20th century, fire was a threat to a homeowner, residents and the community. Fire Departments at the time could often not handle the quick transport of water to the scene of a structure fire. Buildings were constructed primarily of wood. One small fire could end up burning down an entire block or the entire city. It took just over a day to burn the center of Chicago in 1871. Firefighting during those times was an especially difficult, exhausting and treacherous profession for man and beast.

It was actually before the Civil War that one of the first uses of horses to pull fire wagons was recorded. In 1832, the New York Mutual Hook and Ladder Company No. 1 purchased a horse. Horses in the fire station were not initially accepted with open arms. However, as equipment got more sophisticated and heavier, the need for horsepower was eminent.

As their presence in firefighting grew, horses were lauded by firefighters as noble, powerful team members and much loved by the public. They were often very well treated and exceptionally groomed. In those days, humane treatment was not a law and the Fire Department horse was not immune to the dark side of human nature.

Strength

Buying and training one fire horse cost as much as ten firemen. But a horse could pull more than ten times the weight and faster than a man. In Detroit it was said to even have a “horse college” for training. The Aurora Regional Fire Museum in Aurora, Illinois, has some fascinating video of fire horses in action as part of their display, “Getting There, Getting Water, Getting Rescued.” Some of this video can be seen on the museum’s YouTube channel. Notice how the horses immediately run to their positions in front of the wagon when let out of their stalls — that is some excellent training.

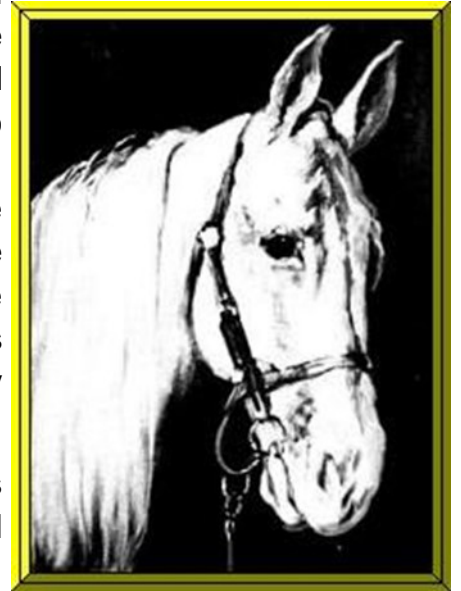
To be considered a fire horse, a horse had to meet certain basic conditions. Training was rigorous, taking up to two years. A fire horse’s career usually lasted from four to eight years. A horse could fall into one of three categories: lightweight at 1,100 pounds for the hose wagons; middleweight at 1,400 pounds for the steam engine; and heavyweights pulled the hook and ladder. Even the “lightweights” had to be hearty horses at 1,100 pounds.

Breed types were typically Percherons, known for their strength and athletic ability. There is not much on record for the other specific breeds used, other than those characterized as “carriage horses.” Carriage horses in the United States at that time could have been anything from the Hackney and Saddlebred to the Cleveland Bay and Thoroughbred.

Bravery

Several fire horses have been remembered and are honored in recollections, memoirs and news stories and at fire history museums.

Jim the Fire Horse, of the Toledo Fire Department, was eulogized in a 1912 newspaper article after suffering a broken leg. The article states, “When and how Jim’s leg was broken is a mystery. He had responded to eight calls during the day and was willing to respond to the ninth. The horse was only seven and a half years old and had only served the fire department for two years, but in that short time had proved himself to be the finest and most accurately trained. He also had the honor of being the most perfect specimen of equine beauty and symmetry of the city’s lot of exceptional horses. He was a very large dapple gray, beautifully marked, and was valued by many to be worth as much as \$400.”



A portrait of Jim had been commissioned prior to his death, but its whereabouts became unknown. However, it was reported that Bill O’Conner, historian for the Toledo Fire and Rescue Department, and Mike Tressler, reporter for The Blade in Toledo, recently found the portrait after 25 years of searching.

Jack and Jack were a famous fire horse team for the Des Moines Fire Department. Old Jack was 23 at the time of his retirement. He had come to the fire department at six years old with the reputation as a “man killer.” However, this was an undeserved nickname. Jack had spooked and kicked the head of his original owner, who had fallen over the dashboard of his wagon and right beneath Jack’s hooves. Young Jack, who was being used as a carriage horse, was purchased for \$175 by the fire department. The two became such a great team that they won a race in the 1903 Iowa State Firemen’s Tournament and many thereafter, earning them the title of “World Champions.”

As an example of how extremely dangerous the profession was at the time, Jack and Jack collided with a streetcar while rushing to a fire, which resulted in the deaths of two firefighters. The two horses miraculously remained unscathed. Upon their retirement from the department, a councilman noted, “Usually worn-out horses are turned over to the Street Department, but if I were to attempt to do that with Jack and Jack, the Fire Department would mob me.” Jack and Jack spent the rest of their lives in farm pastures belonging to a firefighter’s brother.

Fire Horse Fred of New Bern, North Carolina, served for 17 years pulling the company’s hose wagon. He was known throughout the area as a champion hose wagon racer. He pulled at top speed while a firefighter stood on the ground, grabbed the end of the unraveling hose, screwed on the nozzle, and got the water flowing. Fred was also present during a notorious town fire that destroyed 100 homes. He helped create a firebreak and saved the rest of the town.

The New Bern Firemen's Museum memorializes all of the city's fire horses. Fred was so beloved that the firefighters had his head stuffed and mounted when he died at age 25, which is displayed at the museum. It seemed like a bit of an unusual tribute, but their hearts were in a good place.

Chubby was the last Rochester, New York, fire horse. He retired in 1926. A stunning white Percheron, he was the town favorite and struck many a pose.

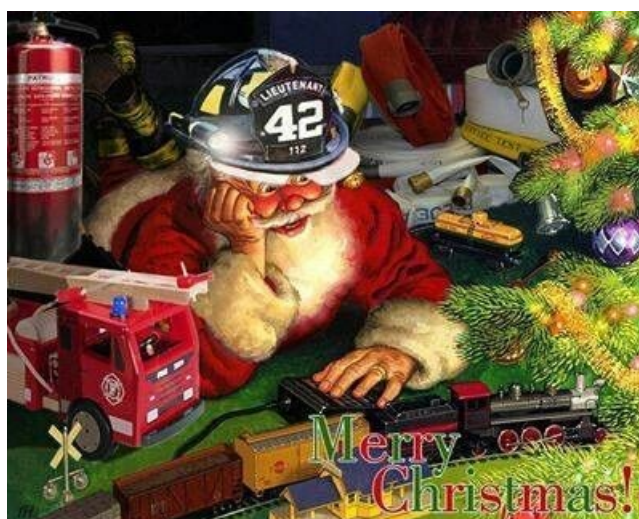
Honor

The Rochester Fire Department honored their horses by petitioning the city cemetery to let them bury fire horses in the firemen's plot, but they were refused. The Rochester American Legion created a bronze plaque in 1926 that still stands today and fittingly describes all fire horses:

- * Our Fire Horses
- * Glorious in beauty and in service
- * Faithful Friends
- * We cannot call them dumb
- * Because they spoke in deeds
- * In every hour of danger
- * Perpetual remembrance
- * Enshrines their loyalty and courage

Hardworking fire horses filled a huge gap between the use of human power and mechanized power. Though horses are still used for work in many parts of the world, we often forget that the traits of power and intelligence that carry us in competition or on the trail were once used to build our modern world. Fire horses not only adapted but thrived in their fire department jobs, and they have rightfully earned their spot in firefighting history.

Heidi Longaberger shared this information. She is an information professional, researcher and writer. She is also owned by a horse that would have probably been really good at rushing down the street with a fire wagon, just not in the direction of the fire.





Union Historical Fire Society

Delaware Valley Chapter

S.P.A.A.M.F.A.A.

www.unionhistoricalfiresociety.com

Meet us on Facebook at Union Historical Fire Society

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