

THE WATCHDESK

ANNUAL REVIEW 2024



COLLECTING • PRESERVING • EDUCATING • INTERPRETING



FEEL THE HEAT • SMELL THE HISTORY
ANNUAL STEAM SHOW IN MAY

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Fire Museum of Maryland is to educate the public about the history, technology, and innovation of the American urban fire service through a unique collection of operating apparatus, memorabilia, and programs.

BOARD

Thomas M. Bruggman, PhD.
President

Eric S. Walker
Vice-President

James E. Melia
Secretary

W. Lee Smith
Treasurer

Mr. Jack Day
Chief Dean A. Denning
Philip G. Ghassemieh
Jordan M. Halle
Melissa M. Heaver
Stephen G. Heaver
Thomas B. Heaver
Todd Huff
Angelo Otterbein
Ross A. Shaffer

STAFF

Stephen G. Heaver
Director & Curator

Nathan S. Davis
Deputy Director

Aaron Lippincott
Education Director

Amy J. Landsman
Media/Public Relations Director

Ed Burgee
Collections Technician

Tom Miller
Assistant Curator

John D. La Costa
Superintendent, Fire Alarm

Gary Hartner
Assistant Registrar

John Eddinger, Jay Iacone, Jessica
Towers
Duty Officers

Wilson Adams, Grace Bussard,
Gray Clemson, Phil Clinard
Tour Guides

James Bigwood, John Bryan
Fire Alarm Operators

EDITOR

Nathan S. Davis

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Christy Wolfe

PHOTOGRAPHERS

James G. Bigwood
Dennis Crawford
Nathan S. Davis
Ed Detwiler
Stephen G. Heaver
Amy J. Landsman
Lee Smith

Special Thanks to Chief Denning

We would like to express our gratitude to Chief Dean A. Denning, of the Baltimore City Fire Department, for his role in controlling the scene as the first City Battalion Chief onsite after the Francis Scott Key Bridge collapse in March 2024. As a member of the board since 2020, and a volunteer here since 2016, we are proud to call Chief Denning a member of the Fire Museum of Maryland family.

We would also like to thank all the BCFD, Anne Arundel Fire Department, and the many state and local police and rescue agencies for assisting in recovery from this disaster. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of those who died.



Chief Denning, left, at the Steam Show

The Director's View

October, 2024

This will be my last 'column' to you as Director. Next year I'll be able to focus on collections and the details that make this Museum special (well, in my mind!). Saying 'last column' is somewhat scary as I have been doing these reports for about fifty-three years, and although I expect that there will be one next year (just shorter), to straddle such a long period of time at one institution; standing upon a ladder and looking both back and forward, makes me want to wax philosophical. I feel right at home 'waxing' as we do much of that here, so please bear with me for a few more lines.

The Fire Museum of Maryland has experienced a brilliant year: commencing with the sprinkler systems in the Archives, main building and Annex. This progress was made through the energetic help of many individual sprinkler valve, piping and control companies under the leadership of Marty Smith. We drove our 1920 Mack bulldog wrecker downtown to the truckmen's show at the convention center; landed many accolades in newspapers and national magazines; landed a new mechanic who loves Model T Fords; picked up a second mechanic who is a retired chief; and brought in a married couple who have helped with a range of horse harness, Christmas Garden and computer indexes. We still need more volunteers at all levels! Please call or email me if you are interested. We installed a chair lift to run up to the archives. This was a gift of Melissa Heaver who has been our collections champion since 1990. We are especially looking for help in the archives and in another year, I hope we can hire a career-track curator to learn steam and early gasoline! This will be essential to keeping the 'fleet' operational. Greg Case and his team built a new 10x20 shed in the space just north of the Annex; this replaced an older, smaller shed that was very inadequate. Greg's design included some windows and a double door.

Our staff continues to 'leap tall buildings' and 'spin super stories' in keeping the visitors focused on information that ties old technology with new science. The birthday parties continue to grow and to a lesser degree the evening rentals. COVID-19 shadows are still lurking. That said, we have had some high-profile receptions and annual meetings. Amy continues to put in flexible time to coordinate many layers of activities. Aaron is developing new scientific approaches to electricity and pumps. Paul worked up an ADT display using Company artifacts and one of his antique bicycles; helped with the completion of the 1920 Seagrave and finished a whole new approach to the Great Fire of Baltimore (1904). He then left our employ, and the Board decided to take his salary money and hire a Deputy Director, Nathan Davis, to look after the facilities. This portion of my job previously, now re-assigned, will allow me more time to fund raise.

In the arena of collections and exhibits we opened a fabulous exhibit on Baltimore's Great Fire of 1904. Since this was Paul's 'big effort' he brings a fresh approach to the problem of overwhelming odds of weather. The 1920 Seagrave, heretofore mentioned, was taken to the national SPAAMFAA convention in York, Pa., where it spoke volumes about the Museum's ability to turn out a near-perfect gasoline-era apparatus.

Ed Burgee prepared a beautiful 10' case display of helmets and speaking trumpets. Other new interpretations include turning the south wall of Aisle A (Hand Drawn) into the fireboat staircase up to the 'Tommy' door, re-styling the Civil War period apparatus including re-positioning the lights. We added a very rare ca.1885 kerosene head light (a gift of mine) and brackets to the horse-drawn Hayes ladder. Cleaning and polishing continue to be done by a superlative volunteer work crew.

Which brings me to the Archives where Gary is sorting the collections in the newly created 14x33' archives storage. New flat files and vertical files have made it possible to give breathing space to all of the architectural drawings and photographs, &c. Tom Miller, Lee Smith, and Ed Detwiler have been doing amazing 'stuff' with moving the eagle, fireboat artifacts and re-wiring lights: too much to cover here.

Ed has rebuilt the 1935 pump transmission-to-differential gear case and started to re-organize the Shop storage: much needed! Kyle overhauled its carburetor and is tightening up the Seagrave following its first big pumping session at the Motor Muster in September.

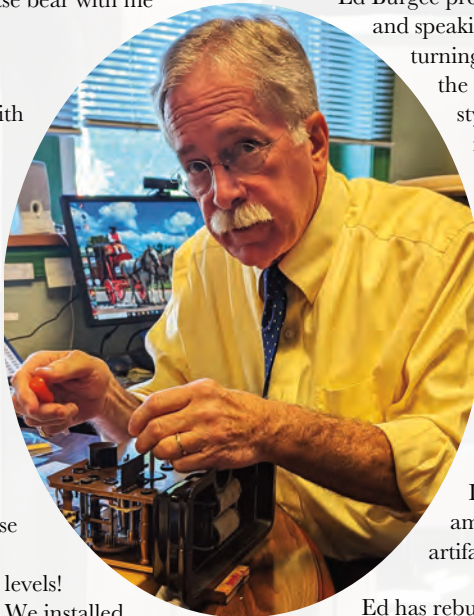
I am eternally thankful to the team that keeps us running! Let the narrative printed above suggest a much larger scope of work in every department. Please consider giving a larger gift this year. Your help is important. If you live too far away to 'drop by', are you aware that you access our historic files via Past Perfect computer software. Call us and we'll explain!

In closing, I want to welcome Angelo Otterbein to our Board of Directors, who brings many new skills to us, and give a round of applause to Lee Smith who is serving as our Treasurer and who has been here almost as long as I have.

With warmest regards,

Steve Heaver

Director & Curator





MEMBERSHIP

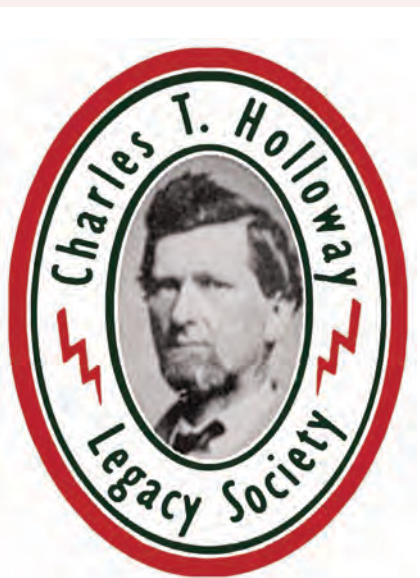
Membership is a popular option for supporting the Museum.

All levels of membership include a year of free admission, and a 10% discount in our Museum store.

Family memberships (\$125) and above include reciprocal admission for two guests to several Baltimore area museums through the Greater Baltimore History Alliance (including the B&O Museum, BMI, and more), as well as discounted tickets to our annual Great Fire of Baltimore event in February.

Memberships make great holiday gifts. For membership information, visit FireMuseumMD.org, call 410-321-7500, x103, or stop by and chat with our staff.

Charles T. Holloway Legacy Society



As the Fire Museum continues into its sixth decade, the Board of Directors invites you to join them in planning for our continued future. The Charles T. Holloway Legacy Society recognizes those who will leave funds or property to the Museum in their will. These are people who have made a commitment to the Museum's future, both in their lifetime and in perpetuity, by making a gift to the Museum's endowment.

A gift of even \$100 makes a difference.

Talk with your lawyer about making a planned gift to the Fire Museum. You will enjoy a sizeable charitable deduction for your state or federal income tax, as well as build the Museum's endowment, supporting your interests through our programs.

Please speak to Steve Heaver at sgheaver@firemuseummd.org for more information.

Functional Beauty on Display

There are many wonderful items in the Fire Museum's archives that tell the story of firefighting in the last two centuries.

Occasionally new exhibits are created to showcase one or more of these items. Our visitors can admire them and take away a new appreciation of the experience of firefighters in times past.

This Spring it was decided to place on exhibit several antique fire helmets and decorative trumpets. Fire helmets, even antique ones, are readily recognizable to our visitors. They are designed to protect the wearer from falling debris and water running down their neck. The front of the helmet has a leather or metal "shield" that identifies the fire company that the firefighter belongs to.

But what about those trumpets? Music

at the time of a fire is hardly helpful so what are they used for?

Actually they are speaking trumpets. Long ago before radios and digital communications systems these trumpets were used to enhance the volume of the voice of the officer in charge of a fire scene. Firefighting operations are very hectic and can be

quite noisy so orders and directions must be clearly heard and understood.

In time, when communications methods advanced, the trumpets were used as insignia to designate levels of rank of fire officers; which they still are today. The insignia can be found on uniform collars and badges. Full sized, beautifully decorated, trumpets have been used for many years as gifts or awards to firefighters.

Come visit us soon and see this wonderful exhibit!

Ed Burgee
Collections Technician



Our Functional Beauty exhibit opened in April



FIRE INSURANCE ORIGINS

by James Goldsborough Bigwood



The Great Fire of London, Josepha Jane Battlehooke, 1675.

Fire insurance, as a concept, developed in the English-speaking world following the Great Fire of London in 1666, which gutted the medieval heart of the city. The property loss during that conflagration was immense, even by modern standards. Estimates suggest that perhaps as many as 13,500 houses, 87 parish churches, and 44 Livery-Company Halls were destroyed—not to mention such important institutions as the Royal Exchange, the Custom House, the General Letter Office, Bridewell Palace, and St Paul’s Cathedral. That Sir Christopher Wren’s new plan for London in 1667 included a site for “the Insurance Office” suggests that public opinion deemed it necessary.¹

Insurers sold policies, by which they contractually indemnified or guaranteed policyholders against property loss—essentially betting against risk. A merchant named Augustine Newbold drew up an insurance scheme for

London in 1679, proposing that a “considerable number of citizens should subscribe a capital of at least £50,000 which would act as a ‘fund’ for the rebuilding of houses burned down.” Additionally, Newbold saw the need for a fire brigade, and that insurance policies should extend for a term of years, to give policyholders a general peace of mind. Though Newbold’s exact plan was not adopted, a different one based on his ideas went into effect in 1681.²

One of the ways that Insurers kept track of policies and policyholders, was through the issuance of certificates—as well as plaques that could be affixed to the exterior of insured buildings. These plaques, known as “fire insurance marks” (or fire marks) contained symbols, and served as visual cues, showing not only which buildings were insured, but by whom they were insured. Charles Povey, founder of the Sun Fire Office in

London, initiated the use of fire marks, when he specified in 1708 that subscribers “shall have a Mark representing the SUN nailed up against their Houses; which Mark is to be Number’d with the Number of the Subscriber’s Policy, and there to remain so long as the Subscribers continue” to pay their dues.³

An entire ocean away from London, eighteenth-century Americans sought to protect themselves from property loss too, and set up their own insurance companies, using these older English companies as a template. By early 1752, Benjamin Franklin, was publishing notices in his newspaper, *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, of an insurance venture he organized that would become the “Philadelphia Contributionship, for insuring



houses by loss from fire.” Franklin’s company, also known as the “Hand-in-Hand,” of Philadelphia, had a distinctive fire mark, which featured “four hands united,” clasped at the wrist in a seat carry.⁴

Knowledge of the earliest insurance efforts in Baltimore are somewhat obscured by the fact that Baltimore Town had no operational printing press until 1765 and no newspaper until the 1770s, but it is clear that Thomas Brereton was operating as a “Commission and Insurance Broker” (probably selling shipping insurance) there as early as 1773, and that by the autumn of 1786, some of the Town’s gentlemen were congregating at The Fountain Inn, in order to promote and discuss the creation of a “Company for the Insurance of Houses against Fire.” They are likely the ones who founded the “Baltimore Insurance Fire-Company” sometime before January of 1788, which was superseded by the “Maryland Insurance Fire-Company” in January of 1792.⁵

The most successful fire insurance venture, however, was the “Baltimore Equitable Society,” for the insuring of houses from loss by fire,” which Joseph Townsend and other civic leaders formed during the early months of 1794, with the intention of protecting the “inhabitants of Baltimore Town, and five miles round the same.” Equitable’s foundational document (or “Deed of Settlement”) specified that policies would last for seven years, that no house could be insured for greater than £1,500 sterling, and that no more than £500 could be put into any one policy. This meant that someone who wanted to insure their dwelling for £1,500 would have to take out three separate £500 policies on the same house. Equitable sold policies N^o 1 & N^o 2 to Humphrey Pierce on April 10, 1794, who insured his three-story 27x80’ brick dwelling at 95 Baltimore Street for £1,000 (via two £500 policies). A few months after Equitable was incorporated by the Maryland General Assembly, Joseph Townsend finally bought into his own venture when he

purchased policy N^o 100 on March 26, 1795—insuring his own two-story 15x29’ brick dwelling at 18 Baltimore Street (the building that doubled as the Baltimore Equitable Society’s insurance office) for £250.⁶

The Equitable Society incurred its first loss by fire on December 4, 1796, when a fire spread from Dr. Lyde Goodwin’s apothecary shop west of Light Street, to several adjacent structures, including two three-story brick dwellings owned by William Hawkins. Hawkins had insured each for £666⅔ on July 27, 1795, taking out two £500 policies (N^o 143 & N^o 145), and two £166⅔ policies (N^o 144 & N^o 146) on the adjoining houses. Fortunately, Equitable was able to make its payout to Hawkins, but not before reminding subscribers that “one half of their deposit money [was] required as a contribution” and posting a list of members at its office, with the amount due for those who had not yet paid their deposits in full.⁷

From that point onward, the ledgers show that Equitable did a steady business, with people renewing their policies every seven years. John Hillen, for instance, insured his three-story brick dwelling at 23 Water Street on June 2, 1794, via Policy N^o 24—and when that one expired, he renewed it via Policy N^o 1050 on September

1, 1801. By the time of the Battle of Baltimore in 1814, Equitable had sold 4,061 policies—and by 1865, it had grown sufficiently large enough to offer perpetual insurance (instead of limiting its customer base to purchasing policies in seven-year increments).⁸

Although it had competition in the nineteenth century—most notably in the Fireman’s Insurance Company of Baltimore (founded in 1825)—

Equitable was able to

withstand the losses incurred by the Great Fire of 1904, and the Fireman’s Insurance Company of Baltimore was not. Today, if you find a fire mark on a house in Baltimore, it is likely to be the familiar clasped-hands “1794” mark of Equitable. But there is at least one house downtown that retains a non-Equitable fire mark on its façade: 108 W. Mulberry Street, which still has a pre-1904 “F. I. C^o” fire mark of the Fireman’s Insurance Company of Baltimore, affixed below the center of the third-story window—a remnant of pre-Great Fire Baltimore, hiding in plain sight. The next time you walk past that fire mark, be sure to pause and remember the enterprising individuals who made our insurance from loss their business.⁹



108 W. Mulberry Street, Baltimore

~NOTES~

1. Roy Porter, *London: A Social History* (Harvard University Press, 1995), 87-88; Adrian Tinniswood, *By Permission of Heaven: The Story of the Great Fire of London* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2003), 127-129; Jacob F. Field, *London, Londoners and the Great Fire of 1666: Disaster and Recovery*. (Routledge, 2018) 19; P[eter] G[eorge] M[uir] Dickson, *The Sun Insurance Office 1710-1960: The history of two and a half centuries of British Insurance* (Oxford University Press, 1960), 4.
2. Dickson, 6.
3. Dickson, 27.
4. *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, Thurs., 18th Feb. 1752, p. 2, col. 2; *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, Thurs., 25th April 1754, p. 6, col. 3; Harrold E. Gillingham, *Fire-Marks of American Fire Insurance Companies Illustrated* (Philadelphia: Self Published, 1914), 12-13 (the design of Franklin's fire mark evidently referenced the "Hand-in-Hand Fire Office" of London, whose fire mark featured a pair of clasped hands).
5. *The Maryland Journal and The Baltimore Advertiser*, Fri., 20th Aug. 1773, p. 3, col. 3; *The Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*, Tues., 24th Oct. 1786, p. 3, col. 3; *The Maryland Journal, and Baltimore Advertiser*, Tues., 15th Jan. 1788, p. 3, col. 2; *The Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*, Fri., 6th Jan. 1792, p. 2, col. 2.
6. *The Baltimore Daily Intelligencer*, Thurs., 27th Feb. 1794, p. 2, cols. 1-3; *The Baltimore Daily Intelligencer*, Sat., 1st March 1794, p. 2, cols. 1-3; *The Baltimore Daily Intelligencer*, Fri., 2nd May 1794, p. 1, col. 3; *Federal Gazette & Baltimore Daily Advertiser*, Mon., 5th Dec. 1796, p. 3, col. 4; *Baltimore Equitable Society, Policy Ledgers, Vol. A (1794-1801)*, Baltimore City Archives, BMS12-1 [BCA 4633], pp. 1 & 36, accessed via MSA Microfilm Reel BCA4633, image 6/450 (Humphrey Pierce purchases Policies N^o 1, N^o 2, & N^o 3), and image 24/450 (Joseph Townsend purchases Policy N^o 100); *Acts of 1794, Chapter XXXIX; Baltimore Town and Fell's Point Directory for 1796*, 60 (address for "Peirce Humphrey" [sic]) & 77 (address for "Townfend Joseph").
7. *Baltimore Equitable Society, Policy Ledgers, Vol. A (1794-1801)*, Baltimore City Archives, BMS12-1 [BCA 4633], pp. 50-51, accessed via MSA Microfilm Reel BCA4633, image 31/450 (William Hawkins purchases Policies N^o 143, N^o 144, N^o 145, & N^o 146); *Federal Gazette & Baltimore Daily Advertiser*, Wed., 14th Dec. 1796, p. 1, col. 1.
8. *Baltimore Equitable Society, Policy Ledger A (1794-1801)*, Baltimore City Archives, BMS12-1 [BCA 4633], p. 9, accessed via MSA Microfilm Reel BCA4633, image 10/450 (John Hillen purchases Policy N^o 24); *Baltimore Equitable Society, Policy Ledgers, Vol. B (1801-1807)*, Baltimore City Archives, BMS12-1 [BCA 4633], pp. 12-13, accessed via MSA Microfilm Reel BCA4633, image 218/450 (John Hillen purchases Policy N^o 1050); *Baltimore Town and Fell's Point Directory for 1796*, 36 (address for "Hillen John"); *Baltimore Equitable Society, Policy Ledgers, Vol. D (1813-1818)*, Baltimore City Archives, BMS12-2 [BCA 4634], pp. 110-111, accessed via MSA Microfilm Reel BCA4634, images 327/529 & 328/529 (Amos A. Williams purchases Policy N^o 4061 on 26th Aug. 1814—the last policy that Equitable issued before the Battle of Baltimore); Charles F. Kincheloe, *Cases Decided in the Court of Claims of the United States January 10 to May 29, 1933 with Abstract of Decisions of the Supreme Court in Court of Claims Cases*, Vol. LXXVII (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1934), 568 & 574.
9. (Baltimore) *American & Commercial Daily Advertiser*, Mon., 21st Feb. 1825, p. 2, col. 5; Gillingham, 24; George Cuthbert Gillespie, Esq., "Early Fire Protection, Fire Insurance and Fire Marks" [An] Address [given] before the Society of Colonial Wars of Pennsylvania [in] 1904 (Philadelphia: Society of Colonial Wars of Pennsylvania, 1905), 31.

Staff Additions

The Fire Museum relies on the tireless work of our staff, both paid and volunteer. This year we have seen the addition of four new staff members: one paid and four volunteers.

Nathan Davis took over the role of deputy director in March. He joins us from the B&O Ellicott City Station Museum, where he was museum manager. He is also a co-author, with his father, of *Hidden History of Howard County*.



Ed Detwiler joined us shortly before Nathan. He hails most recently from Anne Arundel County, MD fire stations.



Mark and Patti Schield began volunteering for us toward the end of last year, working on our Tuesday night crew and joining us on outings like the Fourth of July parade. We are happy to welcome these new additions to the Fire Museum of Maryland family!

Volunteers like Ed, Mark, and Patti keep our museum running year-round. If you are interested in volunteering, please reach out to us!

REVAMPING THE ELECTRICITY LAB!

The Fire Museum of Maryland hosts a variety of different educational STEM programs for youths, but the most electrifying one is our Electricity Lab. Traditionally this program would focus on what electricity is, how it is used in our daily lives, and how electricity was used in the fire alarm telegraph system. That last part would typically be taught via demonstrations in the Fire Alarm Office and by having the participants construct their own self-contained telegraph system using a nine-volt battery, some wires, an electric sounder, copper tape and a clothes pin.

While the program was both fun and informative, it felt lacking. So this past year the museum has added two additional components to the program. The first is a brief discussion and introduction to electrical fires, which is a common cause of many building fires, particularly with increased use in electronics such as smart phones and gaming systems. Following this is a demonstration of electrical fires. This is achieved by museum staff using a nine-volt battery on a small part of steel wool, the steel wool completes the circuit between the two points of the 9-volt battery but because the circuit is not insulated and touches many other parts of the steel wool, it causes a chain reaction of rapid oxidation (fire) throughout the steel wool.

The other new component to the Electricity Lab is an understanding of electricity not just through a circuit, but electrical fields, as well as positive and negative charges. To make this more fun the museum has now included experimentation with a hand cranked Van De Graaff generator as part of the Electricity Lab. This device uses static electricity to create a positively charged field around a large metallic sphere on top of a stand. Countless experiments can be conducted with this field, including a small and harmless static charge at a fingertip when in close contact with the sphere.

Aaron Lippincott
Education Director



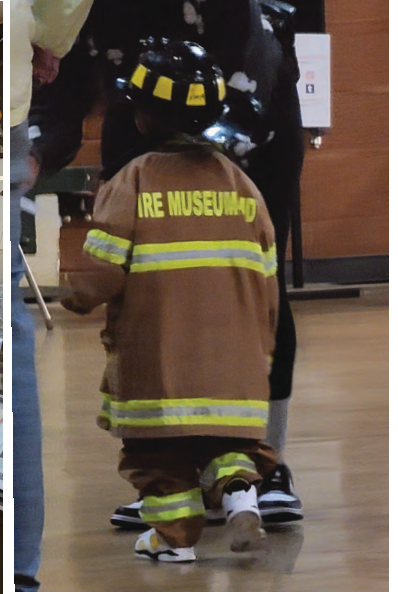
Above: Van de Graaff sparks!

Below: Rapid oxidation of steel wool



46th Annual Steam Show

May 4, 2024



TOMMY UPDATE



Progress on the Thomas D'Alesandro, Jr. Fireboat has been chugging along. Retired from reserve service in 2015, the "Tommy" was partially scrapped in 2018 and the remaining acquired by the museum in 2022. We are making great strides to restore the fireboat to its former glory and integrate it into the museum. Electrical service was completed in June, with an original Tommy ceiling light illuminating the pilot house. Volunteers Jim Morrissey and Dan Weber have built the walls out to allow for insulation and eventually hanging artifacts and signage showing the lives of the men stationed on the Tommy and the technical marvel this boat was when it launched in 1956.

We hope this exhibit honors those who served on the D'Alesandro, Jr., and provides an example to others of how we can keep this history alive.



Gift Shop Goodies!

I am thrilled to share some exciting news from the Fire Museum of Maryland's gift store! First up, our popular Tommy Challenge Coins are back. These coins, themed around our beloved Fireboat "Tommy," flew off the shelves last year, so we have brought in a new batch—available in limited supply. Priced at \$20 each, all proceeds will go towards the ongoing restoration of the boat, making each purchase a meaningful contribution. I would also like to highlight our Fireboat T-Shirts, starting at \$22.50, perfect for showing off your support for the museum and its historic vessel. Image 033



We have also upgraded our payment system to Square, which now allows us to accept contactless and tap-to-pay options. This change makes shopping even more convenient and aligns with the latest trends in payment technology. We are excited to offer this modern touch to enhance your shopping experience.

In addition to these updates, we have refreshed the store layout to showcase our book section. Our collection now features a diverse range of books donated to us from the N.S. Savannah, covering fascinating topics such as World War II, firefighting history, and naval mechanics. Whether you are a history buff like me or you're looking for something special to add to your library, these books are sure to catch your interest. Image 034

Looking ahead, we're excited about the future! 2025 will bring even more new items to our store, continuing our mission to offer unique and meaningful products. A heartfelt thank you goes out to our loyal visitors and generous donors—your support has made these improvements possible.

Wilson Adams,
Former Gift Shop Manager



NEW EXHIBITS



This February, we unveiled a brand-new updated exhibit on the 1904 Great Baltimore Fire, featuring our Clapp & Jones steamer which was in Baltimore fighting the fire in 1904. Many thanks to former curator Paul Rubenson, who planned and executed this build. For the first time we have a permanent timeline of the Great Fire installed for our daily visitors to understand the process of what happened, and the extent of damage the city suffered. Our next Great Fire Seminar will be on February 22, 2025.



The Patapsco firehouse housed our 1848 Rogers engine in Baltimore. Original image courtesy Maryland Center for History and Culture.



Collections technician Ed Burgee assembled the helmets and trumpets exhibit you can find in the back of the museum, near the offices. Read his article on page 5 for more information!

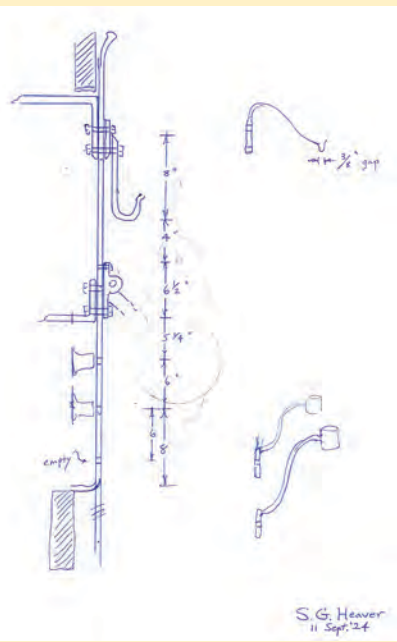


Gearing up for the nation's 250th anniversary, our director has begun a project on Fire Insurance Markers, which will be up and ready for visitors soon! Our exhibit features twenty original fire markers, an original Equitable Society insurance policy from 1801, and more. A history of fire insurance companies and their markers can be found in an article by James Bigwood on pages 6 and 7 in this edition of The Watchdesk.



NEW EXHIBITS

The museum acquired this lantern in April, and it took some effort to add it on to our Hayes Hook & Ladder. Working with blacksmiths to forge new attachments, the lantern will shine for Lantern Night. Center drawing by Steve Heaver.



In September, we took down this eagle and gave it a fresh coat of paint.



Keep Them Fire Engines Rollin'

Did you know that over 1/3rd of our apparatus is still operational and we love getting our rigs on the street! They are all gasoline-powered since the switch to diesel fuel didn't become common practice until the 1970's. We use aviation fuel, giving us higher octane and low levels of lead that these engines crave, thus reducing "engine knock" and helping to keep the engine valves lubricated. And of course, all our apparatus come complete with "millennial anti-theft devices," i.e. manual, unsynchronized transmissions that not only require the use of a clutch, but also a technique called "double clutching" when shifting through the gears. All of our drivers are proficient in, or get extensive training in, this rarely used skill. Last year, our rigs logged over 275 road miles including parades, and public appearances at venues such as The Baltimore Museum of Industry, The National SPAAMFAA Summer Convention, The American Towman's Exposition and beyond.

Our 2 "workhorses" of the fleet are our 1935 Stutz and 1949 Mack pumpers. Both these rigs provide our visitors the chance to be a fireman riding down the streets with lights flashing, bells ringing and sirens blowing. We use these pumpers on Saturdays when we are open to the public and/or

as an add-on to our birthday party rentals. Also on a regular basis, our 1920 Seagrave and our 1922 Ahrens Fox pumpers, along with our 1898 Hale Water Tower (which actually fought the Great Baltimore Fire in 1904), participate in the Towson 4th Parade and visits to the BMI for their Saturday morning Farmers Market. In June, our Seagrave was trailered to York, PA for the National SPAAMFAA Summer Convention where it won the Judges Award. And for the first time in approximately 30 years, we got our 1920 Mack AC Wrecker, designated BCFD RS1, running and drove it from the Fire Museum to the Baltimore Convention Center and back where it was on display at the American Towman's Exposition. It ultimately won 3rd place in the Vintage category. Our 1947 Mack known as BCFD Flood Light 1 also hit the streets going to Touch-a-Truck events in the area and lighting up the night sky during our Lantern Night event.

It takes a lot of work to keep up with this rigorous schedule... but for our staff, it's a labor of love getting these rigs out and preserving our firefighting history for all to see!

Tom Miller
Assistant Curator



1920 Mack Wrecker at American Towman's Expo



Tom Miller driving our 1935 Stutz



Our 1935 Stutz on the road



1920 Seagrave preparing for the national SPAAMFAA meeting in York, PA



Rental Roundup

Looking for a way to wow your clients, or guests? Look no further than the Fire Museum of Maryland.

The Museum hosts corporate seminars, milestone birthdays, weddings, holiday parties, school and family reunions – gatherings from just a couple dozen to 100 or more.

If there will be kids at your event, you can include the Discovery Room.

Our staffed, working fire alarm office is a popular add-on as well.

Surprisingly, most of our rental clients do not have firefighting ties – they simply recognize that the Museum is a unique and exciting place that their guests will remember long after they've forgotten some boring, beige meeting room. And there's plenty of free parking too.

For information on Museum rental space, contact Amy at alandsman@firemuseummd.org or call 410-321-7500, x103.

Amy Landsman, *Media/PR Director*



Boys Latin School Event

Events



The Pride at Mission BBQ on 9/11



The Crew Aboard the NS Savannah



The Pride at Towson's Farmers Market



Towson's July 4 Parade



Preparing the Seagrave for York



Towson's July 4 Parade

MOTOR MUSTER

HONORING OUR HEROES • September 7, 2024



Join us next year!
September
13, 2025

LANTERN NIGHT OCTOBER 21, 2023



Join us
next year!
Oct. 25,
2025

Fulton Bank
LISTENING IS JUST THE BEGINNING.®

**Mechanical
sales, inc.**

Hillendale PRESS, INC.



Historical Society
OF BALTIMORE COUNTY

Honeywell



THE OFFICE OF
Governor

Capital Improvements



Finally, the light at the end of the sprinkler pipe is here! The museum has now achieved its goal of increased fire prevention and safety, making us a steward to our peers. Special thanks to Marty Smith, who has worked hard over the last several years leading the effort.



The Rare Prints Gallery has received new lighting at cost from Southwind Electric.



Capital Improvements

Our event chairs, original to the museum's 1971 opening, and some of which were on their last legs, have finally been replaced! They have served us well for the last fifty-three years, and will continue their lives with anyone who picks them up. Through budgeting and donations, we were able to afford new chairs from Uline.



Alongside the chairs, we replaced a water fountain that dates to the building's construction!



In the archives, we have added two new filing cabinets to the vertical files, and a new map case donated by Dr. David Marsh.



Bad weather shredded our awning in 2023, but now it is brand new!



Ed Detwiler installs a new flag on the Tommy!



Starcom Construction LLC

Reliable

Strickland
FIRE PROTECTION
O'CONNOR CARES SOLUTIONS

POTTER
PROTECTOWIRE
FireSystems



HOME & GARDEN PILGRIMAGE

In April, the Fire Museum team was thrilled to be a part of the annual Maryland House & Garden Pilgrimage. Since 1937, the Pilgrimage has preserved and supported historic preservation throughout the state. This was the first time the Museum has been party of the Pilgrimage. Some 350 House & Garden visitors came through our doors to register, check in and tour the Museum. A donation from the House & Garden team will support updates and renovations to our kids' Discovery Room.

Amy Landsman, *Rentals Director*



Birthday Fun

Fire Museum birthday parties continue to be extremely popular. Parents love the ease of holding parties here.

Our \$250 two-hour party package includes a private party room, and playtime in our interactive Discovery Room. We provide a cart that parents bring to their car, where they unload their paper goods, water bottles, cake, and party favors. They wheel everything back to the party room where set-up generally only takes a few minutes. Families can add a visiting firefighter, the fire-rescue game, or an engine ride to the basic package.

Our party room got a nice update in 2024, as we hauled away our worn-out orange chairs, and replaced them with fresh new, lightweight seating for our guests. For information on parties, contact Amy at alandsman@firemuseummd.org, or call 410-321-7500, x103.

Amy Landsman





Holiday Train Garden

Amy Landsman, *Media/PR Director*

Visiting a train garden is a holiday tradition for thousands of Baltimore area families. In the 19th century, Moravian Germans brought Christmas handicrafts to Baltimore. Pretty soon electric trains joined the mix for a lively holiday display. Firehouses became known for their elaborate train gardens. Some continue the tradition today.

The Fire Museum's Christmas Train Garden started in 1985, and it's really grown since then!

Our Train Garden opens at 10 am on Saturday, November 30, and runs until 4. The Garden is included with your paid admission. Members are always free.

Santa arrives at 11 am on opening day and will be on-hand for free photos till 2 pm.

We have extended holiday hours: open Saturdays from 10 to 4, and Sundays from noon to 4. See our Special Event schedule on the back page for our full holiday schedule.



Donors from October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024

\$10,000-100,000

Mrs. Melissa M. Heaver
State of Maryland
William F. & Caroline Hilgenberg
Foundation
John G. Teichmoeller
Jasper & Anna Peabody Marsh Trust

\$5,000-9,999

Huether-McClelland Foundation, Inc.
Mrs. Lila O'Meara-Judkins
Whiting -Turner Contracting Co.
Ms. Lynn Marie Weber-Zablocki

\$1000-4,999

BFPE International
Mr. Stephen G. Heaver, Jr.
Mr. Robert B. Curran, Esq. & Ms.
Roseanne M. Matricciani, Esq.
Mr. & Mrs. Eric S. Walker c/o Drinker
Biddle & Reath LLP
Ms. Linda G. Schneider
Ms. Melanie S. Begun, President,
Morgan Stanley Gift Fund
Dr. Thomas M., Julie C. and Twill
Bruggman
The Rockland Tavern
Union Historical Fire Society
Mr. & Mrs. John Hashim
Mr. John E. Jones
Mr. John Kemp, Cloverland Farms
Foundation Inc.
Mr. Angelo Otterbein and
Ms. Lauren Calia
Mr. Charlie H. Cruse
Mr. Arnold Davidov
Mr. Edward P. Eagles
Chief & Mrs. Dean A. Denning
Mr. & Mrs. John D. LaCosta
Mr. William P. Roulett and
Ms. Stephanie Loeb

\$500-999

Mr. & Mrs. John B. Tippet, Jr.
Lansdowne Volunteer Fire Assn.
Mr. Paul Quigley
Lutherville Volunteer Fire Co.
Association of Maryland Pilots
Ms. Susan W. Brooks
Mr. Charles T Day
Mr. & Mrs. John E. Day, II
Mr. Eric Froehlich
Mr. & Mrs. William A. Lippincott
Mangione Family Enterprises

\$250-499

Mr. Guy A. Schneider
Chesapeake Antique Fire Apparatus
Association, Inc.
Chief & Mrs. Frank S. Tremel, Jr.
Mr. Robert J. Sarno
Mr. C. Edward Carson
Mr. & Mrs. Philip L. Gilbert
Ms. Mildred Gage McDaniel
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas L. Herman
Fulton Bank
Mr. & Mrs. C. William Schneidereith
Mr. Robert M. Vogel &
Ms. Helena Wright

\$200-249

Boumi Ambassadors
Mr. David L. Brown
Mr. Charles Fleury IV
Mr. George F. Hoover
Mr. William H. Page
Ms. Barbara Robinson
Mr. & Mrs. W. Lee Smith, III

\$150-199

GT Pizza
Mr. William E. Clarke, Jr.
Mr. Daniel A. Jasina
Mr. John W. Sieverts

\$100-149

Mr. Woody Cullum
Mr. Daniel Billig
Fr. Walter F. Burgess
and Ms. Eileen Menton
Mr. Stephen J. Cloutier
Mr. & Mrs. John H. Connors
Mr. & Mrs. William Frank
Mr. & Mrs. Leslie E. Goldsborough, Jr.
New York Life Insurance Co.
Mr. John Kihlstrum
Dr. & Mrs. Peter Molloy
Mr. & Mrs. Howard K. Peiffer
Mr. Bernard J. Punte
Mrs. Olivia P. Rice
Mr. George Rich, the George S. Rich
Family Foundation
Ms. Amy Elizabeth Richardson
Ms. Nancy K. Rubenson
North Point Peninsula Council
Mr. John O. Vannatta
Ms. Susan E. Wallace
Mr. Mark D. Westervelt
Mrs. Dorothea W. Wilfong
Mrs. Mary B. Zampa

Donors from October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024

(CONTINUED)

\$25-99

Mr. G. William Goodwin, Jr.
Ms. Angela Hughes, One Hope
Ms. Marie Anzalone
Mr. Marshall B. Johnson
Mr. Howard L. Brenner
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis E. Crawford
Mr. & Mrs. Steve Fostek
Mr. Spencer Jamison
Mr. & Mrs. Patricia Klosek
Mr. William E. Novak
Mr. Steve Orr
Mr. Bryan Samuel
Ms. Lorraine Seiler
Mr. Richard Skrzysowski
Mr. Michael Sobus
Mr. Timothy T. Weir
Mr. & Mrs. Clarence E. White, Jr.
Mr. Michael Witkowski
Mrs. LaVern A. Wojciechowski
Mr. Michael L. Podrebarac
Mr. Harvey Eckart
Mr. & Mrs. Paul H. Thorne, Jr.
Mr. Barry R. Dexter
Mr. & Mrs. Francis X. Fennell, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis B. Doherty
Mr. Robert V. Hoffman
Mr. & Mrs. Wayne Landsman
Mr. Alfay Manning, Jr.
Mr. Charles R. Shuff

Gifts Given-in-Kind

A.D.T./Everon
American Fire Sprinkler Assn.
(AFSA)
Anthony G. Buono, Esq.
Castle Sprinkler & Alarm
John Contrum
Core & Main
C.W. Flooring, Ltd.
David DeBoy
Ed Detwiler
Robert Hay
Stephen G. Heaver, Jr.
Honeywell
Jay Iacone
John D. LaCosta
Johnson Controls, LLC
Thomas R. Miller
Edmund Schwartz
Potter
Protectowire
Southwind Electric
W. Lee Smith, III
Strickland Fire Protection
Windy City Wire
Christy Wolfe

Special Thanks to
Melissa M. Heaver for her
contribution of \$55,000 for funding
the Deputy Director position, and to
Lila O'Meara-Judkins
who left the Fire Museum \$5,000 in
her will. She was a generous donor
before her passing, gifting the
museum over \$11,000 since 2011.
We are deeply indebted to these two
women, who see our mission as one
deserving of everyone's support.

2025 Special Events at the Fire Museum of Maryland

Visit our website at FireMuseumMD.org, or call 410-321-7500 to check for any updates or schedule changes.

Sunday, February 9: Great Baltimore Fire Event

1pm-4pm. Learn all about the 1904 blaze that destroyed more than 1,500 downtown buildings. Tickets available online at FireMuseumMD.org, or by calling 410-321-7500.

Saturday, March 1: Family Safety Day. Free Admission!

10am-4pm. Join our community partners & learn about disaster preparedness.

Saturday, May 3: Steam Day. Free Admission!

10am—2pm. See working steam & hand drawn engines. Wagon rides. Kids' games & activities.

Saturday, May 17: Antique Car Show

10am-2pm. Chesapeake Region, Antique Automobile Club of America. Our front lot is filled with cool cars!

Wednesday, June 4: Summer Hours Start

10am-4pm. The Museum is open Wednesdays through Saturdays through the end of August.

Saturday, September 13: Honoring our Heroes Motor Muster. Free Admission!

10am-3pm. Antique & modern fire engines. Thrill as we shoot water high in the sky. Kids' activities too.

Saturday, October 25: Lantern Night

6pm-8pm. See the Fire Museum by lantern light. Snacks, reenactors. Family friendly. Tickets at the door.

Saturday, November 29: Holiday Train Garden Opening Day

10am-4pm. O-Gauge trains wind through a 20th century town. Today only: take a free photo with Santa. 11am—2pm.

Holiday Hours: Saturdays: Dec. 6,13, 20. 10am-4pm.

Sundays: Nov. 30, Dec. 7, 14, 21, 28. Noon—4pm.

Holiday Week: Friday, Dec. 26—Tuesday, Dec. 30.

Weekday/Saturday hours: 10am-4pm. Sunday: Noon-4pm.

The Fire Museum is open every Saturday, 10am-4pm, all year long.

Birthday Parties, Meeting Space, & Tours for all ages.

1301-R York Road, Lutherville, MD 21093. 410-321-7500.

FireMuseumMD.org.

