



# REMEMBERING OUR FALLEN FIRE FIGHTERS

*by Scott Mellott, Retired*

As for me, the month of February has not been the same since the year 2000. It had not been long since all the hype took place concerning the new Millenium. There was a lot of concern about all the computers in the world crashing, and as for my wife and I, we were on an Amtrak train going across the state of Utah at the beginning of the year 2000. My friend, Jo, told me prior to our trip that at 12:01 a.m. January 1, 2000 our train would stop dead in its tracks and we would be doing the stuck-out-in-nowhere thing. Well that did not happen and for the most part ringing in the year 2000 was pretty much uneventful.

The calendar then ticked down to Monday, February 14th, Valentine's Day. Those of us not working the night before woke up to the news that the roof of a burning McDonalds Restaurant collapsed and killed two of our Fire Fighters. The two Fire Fighters, both crew members of Engine 76, located in the far Southwest section of Houston, were gone. The first Fire Fighter who perished was Lewis Mayo, age 45. He died when the roof of the restaurant collapsed. The second Fire Fighter, Kim Smith, age 30, died after being trapped in the back of the restaurant and was not able to escape.

Less than one month after we buried Kim and Lewis, I received a call that a scrapbook containing newspaper clippings had been found and turned over to HFD. The scrapbook belonged to Chief Grover Adams who was a member of the HFD from 1915 to 1960.

The book contained an article from *The Houston Press* containing information about a fire at a lamp oil company near downtown Houston. During the fire, a wall collapsed killing one Fire Fighter and injuring several others. The Fire Fighter's name was H. A. "Ace" Harris, age 48, who had been a Houston Fire Fighter for 2 weeks. His name, lost from our records for 79 years, suddenly became new addition to Houston's Line-of-Duty list. Then to add to my surprise of finding the new name, the date that H. A. Harris died was February 14th, Valentine's Day 1921.

The month of February then became my official least favorite month. Then there was the year 2005. Once again, a pretty uneventful beginning of the New Year. Valentine's Day came around, and that year had become the 5th anniversary of the death of Kim and Lewis and the 84th anniversary of H. A. Harris. However we were not able to escape February 2005 without having another reason to dread the month. On the early morning of the 19th we lost another Fire Fighter. Grady Burke, age 39, Captain on Engine 46, died while fighting a house fire. Ironically, the roof of the house collapsed trapping Captain Burke and injuring several crew members of Fire Station 46.

Now, in closing, my point to all of this, even though the month of February is not a personal favorite, is that each month of each year on the anniversary of their death we remember all 60 of the Line-of-Duty Fire Fighters who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

Also remember the family members and friends and especially the children of these Fire Fighters that have had to grow up or are in the process of growing up without their parent.

*This month I am honored to print a poem written by Grady Burke's oldest daughter, Hannah. She wrote this poem for school last year at the age of 12.*



*February 14, 2000*  
**LEWIS EVANS MAYO, III**  
*Fire Fighter - Station 76/A*



*February 14, 2000*  
**KIMBERLY ANN SMITH**  
*Fire Fighter - Station 76/C*



*February 14, 1921*  
**H. A. "ACE" HARRIS**  
*Fire Fighter - Station 10*



*February 19, 2005*  
**GRADY DON BURKE**  
*Captain - Station 46/B*

# Remembering To Never Forget

**TED SANFORD**

*Served HFD 1946 to 1974*

*Died January 27, 2008*

***Total from Jan. 1, 2008 to present - 1 Death***

***Total for the year 2007 - 43 Deaths***

For current information on deceased Fire Fighters, please go to my web site [www.houstonfirememorial.org](http://www.houstonfirememorial.org)  
and click on "Recent Deaths" or email Scott at [scottmel@juno.com](mailto:scottmel@juno.com)

## **THE FIREMAN**

*Written by Hannah Burke*

*You hear the sirens roaring loudly,  
See the people groaning wildly.*

*You can almost feel the flames,  
licking at a once standing house.*

*But, you hear the sirens roaring loudly,  
you see the people groaning wildly.*

*Here they come, dalmation and all.  
They're firemen, they're firemen, come to save them all.*

*10 men in, 9 come out.  
They look to see their Captain wasn't wandering about.  
9 more go in, 9 more come out.*

*The Captain, my daddy, was lost in a fire,  
that of course was not my desire.*

*I want my daddy, I want him back!!!  
But not today, never.*

*But, my daddy wasn't a zero,  
he will forever and always be my hero.*



## ***LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH ANNIVERSARIES FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY***

February 03, 1969  
**STEVE CHARLIE BARANOWSKI**  
Captain - Station 37

February 03, 1973  
**LEWIS W. "MOE" RICHARDSON**  
Captain - Station 7

February 04, 1977  
**JACKIE DUNHAM LUDWICK**  
Sr. Captain - Station 7

February 09, 1929  
**JAMES MAGERSON "MAG" SMITH**  
Firefighter - Station 10

February 14, 1921  
**H. A. "ACE" HARRIS**  
Firefighter - Station 10

February 14, 2000  
**LEWIS EVANS MAYO, III**  
Firefighter - Station 76

February 14, 2000  
**KIMBERLY ANN SMITH**  
Fire Fighter - Station 76

February 19, 2005  
**GRADY BURKE**  
Captain - Station 46

February 29, 1954  
**WOODROW WILSON ERWIN**  
Chauffeur - Station 24

# *The Faces of Local 341*

**1932 to 2008**

## **Houston Professional Fire Fighter's Association**



*Station 6 - 1702 Washington Avenue - 1922. Emery Hard, Captain and Slim Templeton, Driver.*

*Photo provided by E. E. Hard family.*



*Station 42 - Clinton Drive - 1955.*

*(l-r) Garrett Young, Milton Alford, Capt. Doyle Ebel, Wayman Cravin, Samuel Kempt and D. Cunningham (top).*

*Photo provided by Doyle Ebel*

# *Celebrating 76 Years*

**1932 to 2008**

## **Houston Professional Fire Fighter's Association**



*Crew of Station 62 - Snorkle 62 - 1980's*

*Left to Right: Mike Williams,  
Tim Cunningham, Lloyd Wood,  
Captain Terry Thompson*

*Photo provided by Local 341*

*Station 53 - January 2008 - Crew of Engine 53*

*Left to Right: Captain Tommy Lummus,  
Vince Pringle, Gary Bates*

*Photo provided by Scott Mellott*



*Chief "Birdie" Thompson - District 8 - 1980's*

*Photo by Jo L. Kenner*

*Photo provided by the Family of "Birdie" Thompson.*