



REMEMBERING OUR FALLEN FIRE FIGHTERS

by Scott Mellott, Retired

There are many places in the Houston area that serve as memorials to our deceased Houston Fire Fighters. In the future, I will be telling you about these memorials. This month we are starting at the beginning, the original memorial. This memorial's home is Glenwood Cemetery.

First, and you know how I am with history, I will give you some information on this amazing cemetery.

Glenwood Cemetery is located on 84 acres at 2525 Washington Avenue, a short distance from downtown Houston. The area, at the time, was considered a rural area. Glenwood opened as a private cemetery the summer of 1872. When it was first opened, it was considered a landscaped park which, because of the improvements in the street car systems, saw many weekend visitors.

The most famous resident of Glenwood is Howard Hughes, buried there in 1976. Other "notables" interned there are Ross Sterling, Governor of Texas 1931-1932 and William P. Hobby, Governor of Texas, 1917-1919. Another Texas Governor buried in Glenwood is James W. Henderson. Henderson was the fourth governor of Texas from November 1853 to December 1853.

Also buried at Glenwood are Gene Tierney, a Hollywood actress best known for her title role in the 1944 film classic *Laura*; and Judge Roy Hofheinz, a Harris County Judge and a two-term Mayor of Houston. Roy was also famous for co-founding the Houston Sports Association, which brought major league baseball to Houston and, of course with that, along came the Astrodome and Astrodomain.

Prior to the beginning of the paid department, Houston Fire Protection was comprised of volunteer fire companies. In 1888 the companies were, Protection 1, Hook and Ladder 1, Liberty No. 2, Stonewall No. 3, Mechanic No. 6 and Curtin No. 9. In May of 1888, these companies bought Plot 98 in Section C of the Glenwood Cemetery for 300 dollars. This plot was to be used for the members of the department. In June of that same year, the Fire Fighters ordered a stone memorial to be erected on the newly purchased cemetery plot. On top of this monument was a life sized statue, a likeness of the oldest living member at the time, Robert Brewster. The statue stands 5 foot 2 inches and weighs 1400 pounds. It was produced in Carrara, Italy and delivered to the Fire Fighters on December 24, 1889.

In 1895, the City of Houston went from a volunteer department to a paid department. Shortly after that time, the newly formed Department took over ownership of the Fireman's Plot. The monument was not officially dedicated until April 6, 1900. There are 8 souls buried there. The first, Volunteer Fire Fighter Henry Kitely, died in 1888 and the last, Clarence Hartwell, died in 1905. There is also a line-of-duty death Fire Fighter, Ed Thompson, who died April 29, 1899 buried there.

After the original dedication of the memorial, there were, as far as history can tell, no organized memorial services to honor the Fire Fighters buried there. So, as time marched on, the monument has

lived in Glenwood through at least two major floods and without much notoriety.

The next event that took place concerning the Fireman's Plot was 87 years after the monument was erected in Glenwood. For whatever reason, in 1975, the Houston Fire Department moved the monument to 410 Bagby, which at the time was HFD Headquarters. I was able to find that by the mid-1970's the monument was badly needing repairs. Before the monument was moved, it was repaired and cleaned in preparation for it's new home.

In the early 1990's, a group of Houston Fire Fighters, including myself, formed a committee to facilitate the monument moving back to the Glenwood Cemetery. The move, included repairs, and a new foundation for the monument to stand on for generations to come. Memorial services were held many years there during Fire Prevention Week and that continued until the new Fire Fighter's Pension office opened up along with the Memorial Gardens. The first memorial service/dedication was held there on March 9, 2001.

In closing, I hope that you will take time to go by Glenwood and visit this great Memorial to Houston Fire Fighters and look around the cemetery as well. When you visit, follow the signs to the cemetery office and they can point to it from their front porch or you can go to my website (www.houstonfirememorial.org) and download a map that has the "Spot" marked.



For more Fire Fighter pictures and information, see pages 12 & 13.

Remembering To Never Forget

BOBBY DEE CARRAWAY

*Served HFD 1968 to 2004
Died February 18, 2009*

GEORGE HARLAN CONWAY

*Served HFD 1952 to 1977
Died January 13, 2009*

PHILLIP LEE HUDGENS

*Served HFD 1977 to 2005
Died February 1, 2009*

TRACY BIRKELBACH

*Served HFD 1961 to 1991
Died January 1, 2009*

Total from January 1, 2009 to present - 4 Deaths

Total for the Year 2008 - 39 Deaths

LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH ANNIVERSARIES FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH

March 1, 1928
GEORGE L. BISHOP
Captain - Station 4



March 12, 1951
**RUFUS JOHN
"BULLOCK" TEMPLET**
Captain - Station 5



March 10, 1953
**CHARLY A.
MIDDLEKAUF**
Assistant Chief -
Central Station



March 31, 1947
**JAMES
EDWARD LOWTH**
Fire Fighter - Station 26



For current information on deceased Fire Fighters, please go to my website: www.houstonfirememorial.org
and click on "Recent Deaths" or email Scott at scottmel@juno.com

My website contains information on current Houston Fire Fighter deaths, obits, line-of-duty deaths and many other items. There is also information on my memorial t-shirts. If you have any input on this site, I would be glad to hear from you, email me at scottmel@juno.com

Also visit www.firefighterclosecalls.com. Website where my friend and Fire Fighter safety advocate Billy Goldfedder has his information. Also while you are there sign up for his email newsletter The Secret List, where you will get current information on Fire Fighter injuries and deaths around the United States.

The Faces of Local 341

1932 to 2008

Houston Professional Fire Fighter's Association

Photos on this page submitted by Scott Mellott (Retired)



Photo provided by Louis Snider, Sr.

Fire Station 17 - 319 Sampson - July 30, 1955.

(l-r) Louis Snider, Sr., Leo Brosemer, Eldon Rimmer, Cleatus "Stumpy" Dunn, Louis "Moe" Richardson, Anson Keith, Leo Barr, C. R. "Jake" Cook, Bruce Whatley.



Photo provided by Scott Mellott

***Chief Earl McWilliams - May 22, 2008.
Station 8 Grand Opening.***



Photo provided by Bill Love.

Willis Moore - Station 38 - November 1988.

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**FF Mike Thompson 103/C Shift.
June 20, 2008.**

Photo provided by J. J. Reneau



**Roy Gonzales with "Victim" Bert Withers.
Fire Academy 1978.**

Photo provided by Joe Delgadillo



**Station 101/D-Shift –January 23, 2009.
(l-r) Sr. Captain Jeff Lyons,
FF Brian Lathan, FF Randy Brown,
E/O Sergio Garcia.**

Photo provided by Scott Mellott



**Station 103/D-Shift –January 23, 2009.
(l-r) E/O Jeff Sobotik, Captain David Dausat,
FF Gary Josephson, FF Dean Freitag (102/D Shift).**

Photo provided by Scott Mellott