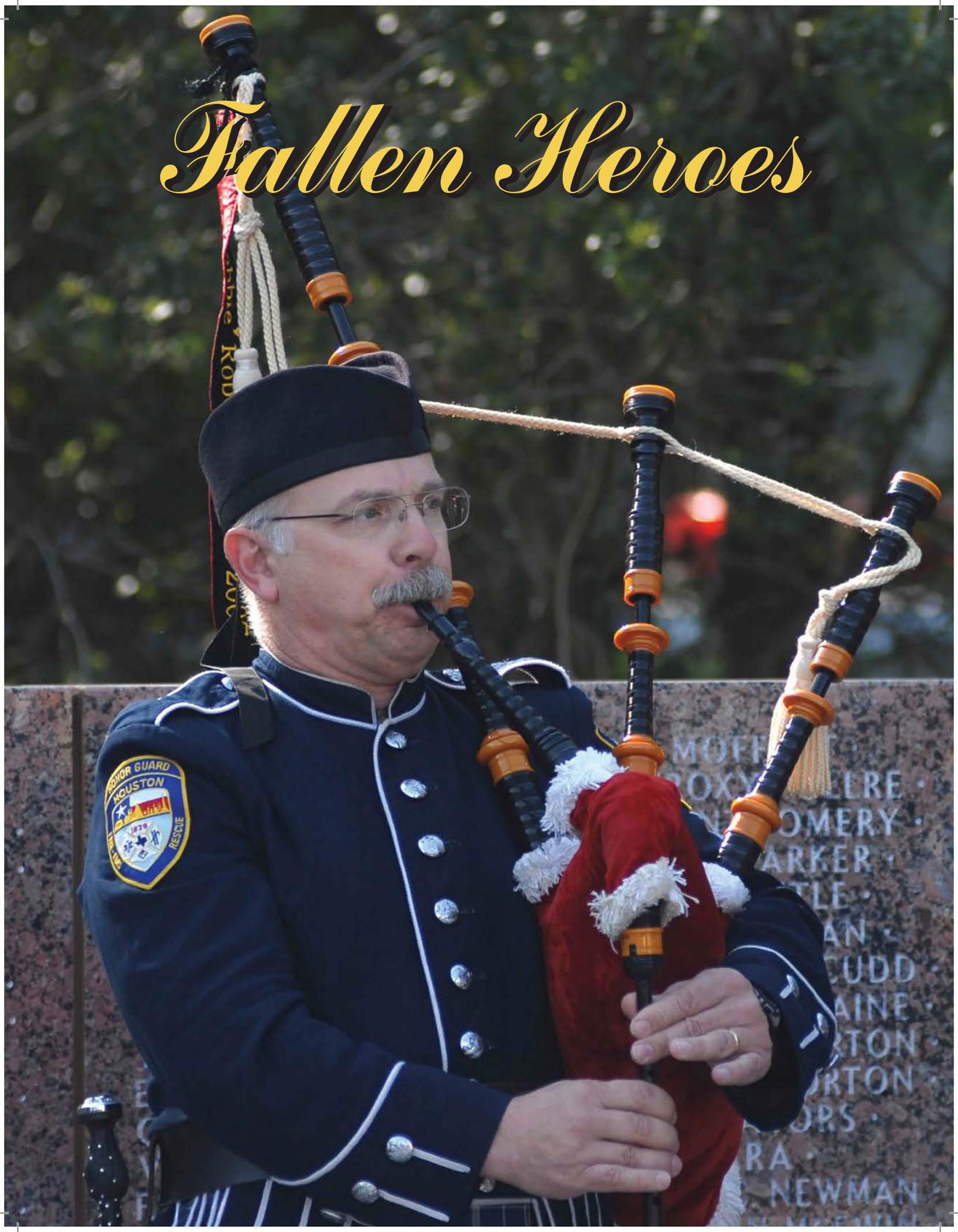
Fallen Heroes

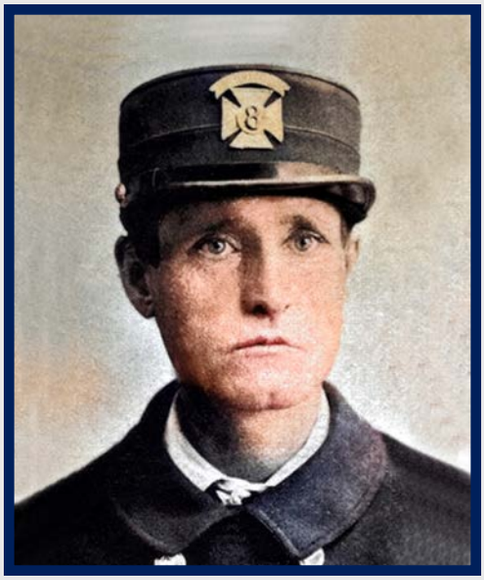




Emil "Ed" Thompson

Born: March 3, 1868, in Stockholm, Sweden
Died: April 27, 1899, at age 31
1st HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: January 1, 1897
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-
Hose Company No. 5
Buried: Glenwood Cemetery, Fireman's Plot,
Section C, Plot 98, East Half

Emil Thompson died after being hit by No. 56 Texas Central Railway train. The crew was responding to a house fire located at 1508 Crockett Street and Johnson Street. Houston Avenue was the fastest route, but was not always the best, especially after heavy rain. The driver, Henry Donnley chose to take a different route to avoid Houston Avenue. Hose Wagon 5 was attempting to cross the railroad tracks at Hickory Street, which had an unusually steep grade and had a blind spot. The hose wagon was already crossing the tracks when the driver realized they were in jeopardy of being hit by oncoming railcars being pushed through the crossing. The driver shouted at the well trained horses, and was able to avoid being hit by the train. The crew members riding in the back feared the fire apparatus would not clear the tracks in time and began jumping. Thompson was the last man off and fell backward into the path of the train where he died instantly. Emil was survived by his wife of five years, Winona; they were married March 22, 1894.



Frank William Medlenka

Born: June 15, 1859, in Louisville, Kentucky
Died: November 23, 1901, at age 42
2nd HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: September 21, 1895
Assignment: Driver-Washington No. 8
Buried: Glenwood Cemetery,
Old Strangers Rest, Space 320

Frank, the driver of horse-drawn Steamer 8, was responding to call received from Fire Alarm Box 315 at the corner of McKinney Street and Chartres Street. The steamer crossed streetcar tracks at the intersection of McKinney Street and Jackson Street where new tracks were under construction. Hose Wagon 8, leading the way, displaced planks covering the site causing Steamer 8 to overturn. Frank was crushed under the overturned steamer and was taken to St. Joseph's Infirmary where he died later that night. Frank Medlenka entered the Houston Fire Department at age thirty-six. His father owned one of the first local newspapers, the *Houston Hearld*, which later became the *Houston Chronicle*, where Frank worked as a pressman. He developed an allergy to the ink; his condition was called "the printer's disease." His doctor advised him, for his health, to change professions, which he did. Frank was a member of the Houston Volunteer Protection Hose Company No. 1 from 1883 to 1887 as the First Assistant Foreman. In September 1895, he became one of Houston's first paid firefighters. Frank's name was never added to the HFD's Line of Duty Death roster. His nephew Ralph Stenzel found the oversite. In 1985, eighty-four years later, Frank became HFD's second line of duty death.



Clifford William Johnson

Born: April 1, 1878, in Houston, Texas
Died: June 13, 1902, at age 24
3rd HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: 1899
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-
Central Fire Station
Buried: Hollywood Cemetery,
Mossy Dell, Plot 42, Space 6

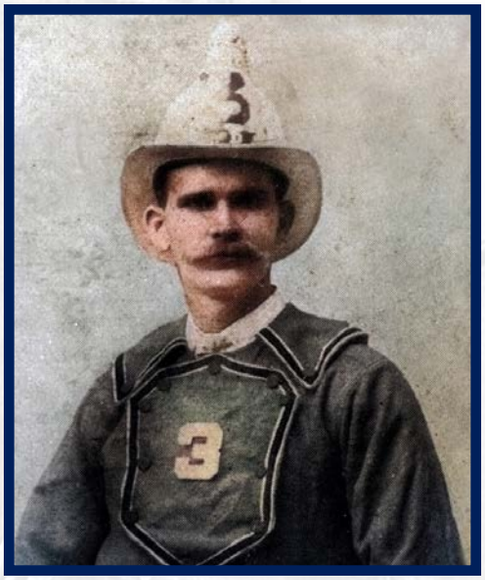
Clifford Johnson, driver of the Fire Chief's buggy, died while responding to a fire located at 1611 Franklin Street and Crawford Street. His assignment was to pick up Fire Chief "Jack" Arto at home and respond to the fire. He was traveling at a high rate of speed on Crawford Street and as he passed Washington No. 8, he ran into the rear of a slow-moving buggy without taillights. The men at the fire house tried to warn the civilian driver but were unsuccessful. Johnson was transported to St. Joseph's Infirmary where he died early the next day.



Barnett Cohen "Barney" Moffatt

Born: October 10, 1858, in Houston, Texas
Died: April 26, 1908, at age 49
4th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: September 21, 1895
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-Engine Company No. 7
Buried: Glenwood Cemetery, Section D, Plot 94, Space 1

Barney Moffatt died while fighting a fire at the Mercantile Grain Company, located at 1215 Hardy Street and Lyons Avenue. He was doing clean up with his Lieutenant, Lawrence Lazzio. They were working on the ground floor of the building, assigned to check for hot spots. The floor was overloaded and stacked to the ceiling with sacks of feed, which caused the floor to weaken and collapse into the cellar. Barney fell with the floor and perished; Lawrence was able to survive by grabbing one of the pipes in the ceiling. Just prior to Barney's death he had been off over a year after being injured in an accident while driving Hose Wagon 5. After recovering from his injuries, he was assigned to Fire House No. 7. Moffatt was a member of the Houston Volunteer Stonewall Hose Company No.3 for nine years from 1886 to 1995. He was one of the first firefighters hired when the City of Houston went from a volunteer department to a paid department in September of 1895. Barney was survived by his wife of 25 years, Maggie, and daughter Bell who was twelve years old at the time of her father's death.



Thomas Andrew "Tom" O'Leary

Born: November 21, 1860, in Newport, Wales, UK
Died: December 24, 1908, at age 48
5th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: September 21, 1895
Assignment: Fire Chief-Central Fire Station
Buried: Glenwood Cemetery,
Section West Avenue, Lot 343, Space 1

Fire Chief Thomas O'Leary lost his life while he and his crew were trying to extinguish a fire in a railroad boxcar loaded with fireworks. The fire took place on the afternoon of November 22, 1908, in the Houston Belt Terminal Railroad switching yard located east of downtown. The fire started when a switch engine kicked a boxcar into a boxcar loaded with the fireworks. The collision of the two boxcars caused an explosion and the ensuing fire. Chief O'Leary was directing his men with little or no concern about the exploded boxcar because the explosion blew the roof off the car, thus minimizing danger. The main concern was the possibility of the fire reaching the other rail cars; however, unknown to the firefighters, large shells for aerial fireworks were on board the boxcar. Those who investigated the accident believed that one or more of the shells exploded in the end of the car where Chief O'Leary stood. The Chief took the full brunt of the blast. Five firefighters were injured and taken to St. Joseph's Infirmary, along with Chief O'Leary. Tom fought courageously for his life until December 24, 1908, when he lost his final battle. Tom was the foreman of the Houston Volunteer Stonewall Hose Company No. 3 from 1889 to 1895. In September of 1895 he was hired as one of the first paid Houston firefighters. He was survived by his wife, Amelia and his daughter Irene, who was fourteen at the time of her father's untimely death.



Herman Joseph "Dutch" Wagner

Born: June 2, 1871, in Chicago, Illinois
Died: May 25, 1912, at age 40
6th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: September 21, 1895
Assignment: Captain-Washington No. 8
Buried: German Society Cemetery,
Washington Cemetery Section D, Plot 2, Space 4

On May 19, Captain Wagner was struck by a heavy timber while fighting a fire at the six-story Stowers Furniture Building located at 701 Main Street between Rusk Street and Capitol Street. The fire destroyed a whole city block, including three adjacent buildings. He was transported to St. Joseph's Infirmary, where he fought for his life for six days. After surgery was performed in a final attempt to save his life, he never regained consciousness. A local newspaper dubbed the incident "The Multi-Million Dollar Fire." Captain Wagner had remarked to his wife one day when they were downtown that the Stowers Building was dangerous and would someday kill a firefighter. He never thought the firefighter would be himself. Herman Wagner was one of the first paid firefighters hired when the City of Houston went from a volunteer department to a paid department in September of 1895. Herman was survived by his wife Emma. They had two daughters, Lilly, age seventeen and Agnes, age seven, and a son Eddy, age fifteen.



Clifford Allen Wiese

Born: June 10, 1891, in Houston, Texas
Died: July 14, 1913, at age 22
7th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: July 4, 1912
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-Hose Company No. 3
Buried: Magnolia Cemetery, Section 39, Space B, in the Wiese family plot

Clifford Wiese had worked for the Houston Fire Department for a few months in 1912. He had been reinstated for ten days when he was a victim of an accident on July 14, 1913. Clifford was assigned to Fire House No. 3 located at 1919 Houston Avenue and Spring Street. His duty the day he died was that of driving a mule-drawn supply wagon and delivering supplies to the various fire houses around the city. Upon completing his daily deliveries, he began the trip back to Fire House No. 3. There was a railroad track that ran beside the fire house which was in need of repair. The maintenance crew of the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad was repairing the track with a work train that consisted of various types of cars used to hold the needed equipment and materials. Wiese and his wagon were traveling on Johnson Street and were less than five hundred feet from the back of the fire house when he began to cross the railroad tracks to turn onto Spring Street. At the same time the locomotive of the work train was pushing its railcars across Johnson Street where Wiese was attempting to cross. The lead railcar hit the wagon splintering it into many pieces, injuring the mule and fatally injuring Clifford. Clifford was taken by ambulance to St. Joseph's Infirmary where he died several hours later. Clifford was survived by his parents, Gustav and Loretta, and his four sisters, Olive, Norma, Cordelia, and Maude.



Patrick O'Hara

Born: March 17, 1878, in Dublin, Ireland
Died: September 21, 1913, at age 35
8th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: 1906
Assignment: Lieutenant-Fire House No. 6
Buried: Calvary Cemetery, Cleveland, Ohio, Section 9, Lot 1207, Grave 2

Patrick O'Hara died responding to a signal transmitted from Fire Alarm Box 412, located in the Fourth Ward, San Felipe Street and Hobson Street, where a small shack was burning. Engine 6 hit a hole in the street where the bricks were missing. O'Hara was thrown from the side of the engine and fell against a telegraph pole where he died instantly. The accident occurred at Sabine Street and Lubbock Street at 7:30 a.m. His body was put on a train by the Westheimer Undertaking Company and sent to Cleveland, Ohio where his two sisters and brother lived. Patrick, at age twenty three, immigrated to the United States via Ellis Island in 1901 and married his sweetheart, Sarah Haggerty on September 16, 1902. O'Hara petitioned to become a citizen of the United States in 1905 and moved to Houston, Texas to become a member of the Houston Fire Department in 1906.



Robert Rutherford Glass

Born: September 14, 1882, in Houston, Texas
Died: December 1, 1913, at age 31
9th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: 1902
Assignment: Driver-Central Fire Station
Buried: Evergreen Cemetery, Section B2, Plot 21, Space 3

Robert was the driver of Auto Chemical Engine 1. He died while responding to a house fire in the Fifth Ward. While exiting the Central Fire Station, the apparatus collided with Car No. 119 of the Galveston-Houston Electric Railway as it was leaving the round house, which was nearby the Central Fire Station, for a round trip to Galveston. Glass was transported by ambulance to St. Joseph's Infirmary with two of his crew members, George Richardson and Raymond Cabanaugh while both of them were released and returned to work, Robert succumbed to his injuries the next morning at 9:35 a.m. Robert was the Vice President of the City Fireman's Union No. 9629, organized on March 5, 1902. He held that office from 1906 to 1908. The union was disbanded after Fire Chief O'Leary died in the line of duty in 1908. The new Fire Chief, Reginald "Kid" Ollre, was never in favor of an organized union. Robert was survived by his wife of seven years, Della, and son James.

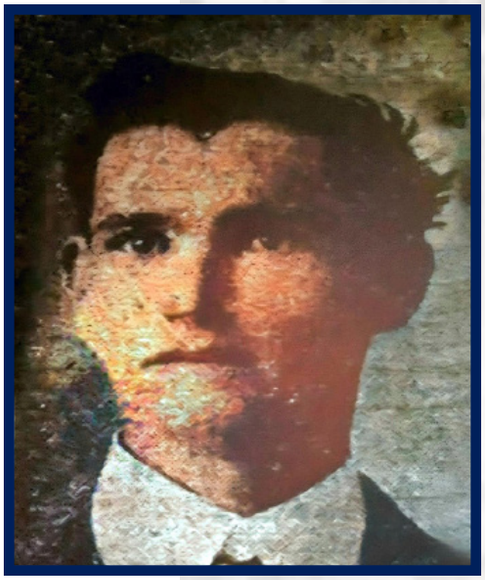


Henry A. “Ace” Harris

Born: October 24, 1873, in Calvert, Texas
Died: February 14, 1921, at age 47
10th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: November 1, 1920
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-Fire House No. 10
Buried: Sunnyside Cemetery, Calvert, Texas, left side from the front gate, four rows from the front fence

Before Henry Harris became a member of the Houston Fire Department, he was a member of the Dallas Fire Department for twelve years. When he moved to Houston, he painted houses until he was hired by the HFD. He had been a member for three and a half months when Engine 10 responded to a fire at the Texas Lamp and Oil Company located at 203 Baker Street and Cedar Street. Due to the lack of water supply, the fire crews had to drag hose lines through a narrow alley to reach the burning building. Harris, along with the other crew members, entered the alley with two hose lines in order to gain access to the building.

Meanwhile, another crew opened a door on the opposite end of the building. This created a backdraft causing multiple barrels of denatured alcohol to explode, blowing out the wall bordering the alley, trapping Harris and seven other firefighters. Harris did not perish from the falling wall; the heavy lamp oil suffocated him. The company suffered over one hundred thousand dollars worth of damage. The cause of the fire was faulty electrical wiring. Harris’s death was overlooked by the fire department for seventy nine years. A scrapbook was obtained from the estate of a Houston firefighter, Chief Grover Cleveland Adams, contained a *Houston Press* clipping dated February 15, 1921, verifying Harris’ service. He was survived by his wife of 26 years, Nellie and their daughter Ethel.



Harry Dodd

Born: November 17, 1883, in Kinney, Texas
Died: July 26, 1923, at age 39
11th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: January 1, 1921
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-Central Fire Station
Buried: Hempstead Cemetery, Hempstead, Texas, located in the Dodd Family Plot

Harry Dodd died when Hook and Ladder 1 responded to a house fire located at 1315 Shaw Street and Andrews Street. The fire apparatus was involved in an accident at the intersection of Dallas Street and Milam Street. A doctor, who was rushing to take care of a patient, entered the intersection at the same time as Hook and Ladder 1. The two vehicles hit with such force that the ladder truck was pushed into the Chapman Street Trolley that was stopped waiting for the fire truck to clear the intersection. Several of his crew members and four civilians were injured in the collision. Harry did not survive the accident. Harry was survived by his parents, Richard and Emily Dodd.



John Andrew “Bob” Boyd

Born: November 3, 1870, in Galveston, Texas
Died: August 4, 1923, at age 52
12th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: September 21, 1895
Assignment: First Assistant Chief-Central Fire Station
Buried: Holy Cross Cemetery, Section H, Plot 71, Space 6

Chief Boyd died when Chemical Truck 1 responded to a reported house fire. The apparatus was attempting to avoid a collision with a passenger car and struck a telephone pole at the intersection of Congress Street and Hamilton Street. Chief Bob Boyd was transported to St. Joseph’s Infirmary where he died several hours after arrival. Two of the three firefighters on the truck were injured, and were also taken to St. Joseph’s Infirmary. Frank Haynes, the driver of the passenger car was later charged with negligent homicide.

Bob Boyd began his career as a paid driver with the Houston Volunteer Stonewall Hose Company No. 3. He held this position from 1892 to 1895. In September 1895, he became one of the first paid Houston firefighters. He left the fire service in 1919 to serve as a trainman on the Southern Pacific Railroad. In May of 1923, Fire Chief Cornelius “Roxy” Ollre became angry with the two current Assistant Chiefs, and demoted both of them. He contacted Boyd and convinced him to return to his previous position of First Assistant Chief. He died just three months after he returned to the ranks of the Houston Fire Department. Bob was survived by his wife Ruby.



Harold Albert Denny

Born: September 6, 1905, in Houston, Texas
Died: May 1, 1924, at age 18
13th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: October 1923
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-Fire House No. 9
Buried: German Society Cemetery,
Washington Cemetery Section D, Lot 44, Space 4

Harold Denny, very new to the department, died when Engine 9 collided with a streetcar while responding to a fire at the Blue Front Boarding House located at 404½ Milam Street and Preston Street. At the time of the alarm, Harold was not on duty but was bringing bed sheets to his brother-in-law, John S. Little Sr., who was the Captain at Fire House No. 9. When the fire call came in, he responded with the crew. The driver of Engine 9 used the North Main Viaduct, as they exited the north end, a streetcar hit them, Denny died instantly, one crew member was injured. He was survived by his parents, John and Mary Denny and by his sister Laura and brother-in-law John Little who dired in the line of duty five-years later on July 11, 2929.



George LaSalle Bishop

Born: April 4, 1884, in Montgomery, Texas
Died: March 1, 1926, at age 41
14th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: 1916
Assignment: Captain-Engine Company No. 4
Buried: Forest Park Cemetery, Lawndale,
Section J, Plot 128, Space 2

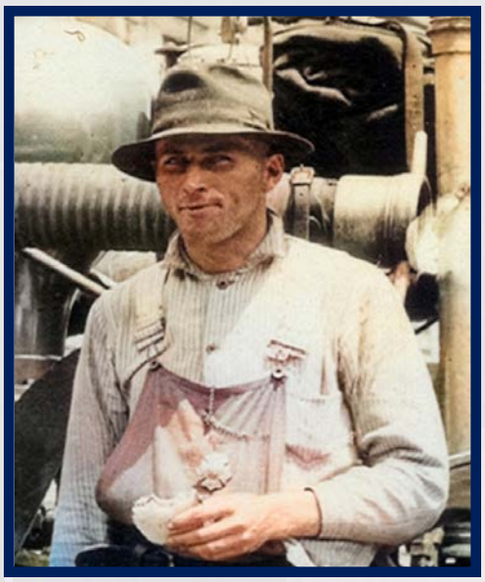
On Sunday, February 28, 1926, Captain Bishop's crew responded to a two-story vacant house fire located at 2707 Grant Street and Westheimer Road. On arrival, the structure was heavily involved. Captain Bishop led his crew up the rear outside staircase. Once they reached the second floor porch, the chimney collapsed and fell into the porch. The impact ripped the porch away from the house, throwing the men to the ground. A large number of bricks and debris fell on Captain Bishop, severely injuring him. Captain Bishop was transported to Jefferson Davis Hospital where he died at 7:20 a.m. the following morning. George was survived by his wife of eight years, Dora.



Claude William Edmonds

Born: September 25, 1894, in Scooba, Mississippi
Died: August 19, 1926, at age 31
15th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: December 16, 1916
Assignment: Captain-Central Fire Station
Buried: Forest Park Cemetery, Lawndale,
Section I, Plot 181, Space 2

Captain Edmonds was conducting a ladder drill with Ladder 1, in the parking lot beside the Central Fire Station. The eighty-five-foot aerial ladder was raised, and the firefighters were taking turns climbing down the backside of the ladder. This was not a routine fire department drill. Several firefighters had climbed the ladder before Captain Edmonds took his turn. As Captain Edmonds reached the top of the ladder, it began to sway in the wind and suddenly cracked and fell across Preston Street hitting an overhead trolley car wire where the ladder broke again. When this happened, Captain Edmonds fell to the street where he was critically injured. Claude, was taken to St. Joseph's Infirmary where he died a short time later. Claude was survived by his wife of five years, Annie. Tom Powers, early into his career, was climbing the ladder just below Captain Edmonds. The ladder broke right above Tom; he was not injured. He went on to serve the citizens of Houston for fifty years.



James Magerson "Mag" Smith

Born: August 23, 1891, in Taylor, Texas
Died: February 9, 1929, at age 37
16th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: May 4, 1908
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-Fire House No. 10
Buried: Evergreen Cemetery, Section B2, Plot 56, Space 4

James died while hooking up a hose line to a fire hydrant during a heavily involved house fire located at 2704 Congress Avenue and Dowling Street. Engine 10 arrived at the scene and stopped at the fire hydrant down the block. Mag got off the back of the fire truck to hook a hose line to a fire hydrant. When Engine 10 proceeded to the fire, a hose coupling caught in the bed of the pumper and pulled the end of the hose like a slingshot from the grasp of Mag. When this happened, the hose coupling hit him in the head, the blow was fatal. Smith first entered the Houston Fire Department in 1908 at age seventeen. In 1913, after five years of service, he resigned. He was rehired in 1920 and had continuous service until his death. His brother, William, entered the Houston Fire Department in 1924 and served the citizens of Houston for forty years.



Rudolph Leon "Rudy" Hendricks

Born: September 29, 1906, in Colorado City, Texas
Died: June 22, 1929, at age 22
17th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: January 4, 1928
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-Fire House No. 25
Buried: Rosewood Cemetery, Humble, Texas,
Section I, Lot 112, Space 4

Rudy Hendricks, with less than two years in the department, died while operating a hose line at a house fire located at 3552 Reeves Street and Scott Street. A power line burned through at the house and fell, electrocuting him. He was transported to Houston Methodist Hospital but died before arrival. He was survived by his wife of two years, Mabel, his childhood sweetheart.



Edgar Henry Grant, Jr.

Born: March 20, 1902, in Houston, Texas
Died: July 2, 1929, at age 27
18th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: February 18, 1928
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-Fire House No. 18
Buried: Forest Park Cemetery, Lawndale,
Section C, Plot 109, Space 7

Edgar Grant, who had been in the department almost five months, died along with Captain Little and Harry Oxford when Engine 18 was dispatched to a house fire located at 2426 Wilshire Street and Telephone Road. The incident was just before midnight; the firefighters were distracted by a large glow in the sky from the house fire. As they approached the unmarked railroad crossing at Telephone Road and Lombardy Street, they did not see a south bound, No. 63 Gulf Coast Line Railway train pulling fifty-four cars entering the crossing at the same time. Engine 18 was broadsided; Grant, being the most critical, was taken by private car to Memorial Baptist Hospital where he died soon after arrival. Two members of the crew were injured. Edgar was a member of the United States Navy toward the end of World War I. He was a Seaman 2nd Class and stationed in San Pedro, California. He was survived by his father, Edgar Henry Grant Sr.



Harry Lloyd “Red” Oxford

Born: July 3, 1895, in Dallas, Texas
Died: July 3, 1929, at age 34
19th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: November 16, 1928
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-Fire House No. 18
Buried: Forest Park Cemetery, Lawndale,
Section 1, Plot 143, Space 4

Harry Oxford had been in the department eight months when he died along with Captain Little and Edgar Grant when Engine 18 was dispatched to a house fire located 2426 Wilshire Street and Telephone Road. The incident was just before midnight; the firefighters were distracted by a large glow in the sky from the house fire. As they approached the unmarked railroad crossing at Telephone Road and Lombardy Street, they did not see a south bound, No. 63 Gulf Coast Line Railway train pulling fifty-four cars entering the crossing at the same time. Engine 18 was broadsided; Harry was transported to Memorial Baptist Hospital where he died the next day at 9:10 a.m., his thirty fourth birthday. Two members of the crew were injured in the accident.



John Sellis Little, Sr.

Born: November 19, 1883, in Knoxville, Tennessee
Died: July 11, 1929, at age 45
20th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: June 4, 1913
Assignment: Captain-Fire House No. 18
Buried: German Society Cemetery,
Washington Cemetery
Reinterred: August 3, 1966
Buried: Forest Park Cemetery, Lawndale,
Section 27, Plot 59, Space 12

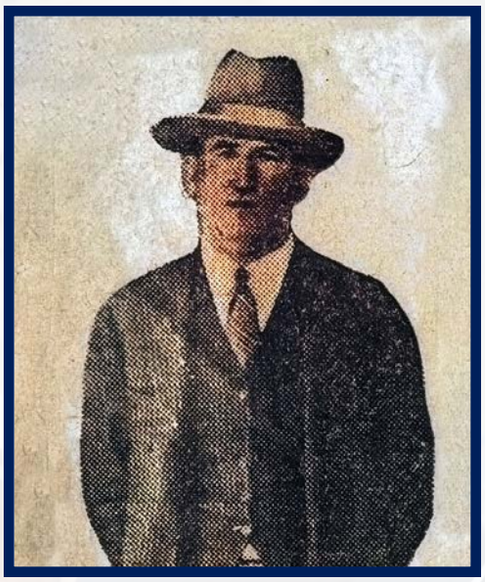
Captain Little, with sixteen years in the department, died along with Harry Oxford and Edgar Grant when Engine 18 was dispatched to a house fire located at 2426 Wilshire Street and Telephone Road. The incident was just before midnight; the firefighters were distracted by a large glow in the sky from the house fire. As they approached the unmarked railroad crossing at Telephone Road and Lombardy Street, they did not see a south bound, No. 63 Gulf Coast Line Railway train pulling fifty-four cars entering the crossing at the same time. Engine 18 was broadsided; two members of the crew were injured in the accident. Captain Little was transported to Memorial Baptist Hospital. After undergoing several surgeries in an effort to save his life, John died nine days later. Prior to his assignment at Fire House No. 18, his rank was Battalion Chief. He, however, voted for the Mayor of Houston’s rival and was punished by Fire Chief Fred Seibert. John was demoted to the rank of Captain, with that came lower pay and a new assignment, “Fire House No. 18.” John was survived by his wife, Laura Denny and his daughter Louise Jahnke, who was seven at the time of her father’s death. The Little family were scheduled to leave for a family vacation the next day when he got off work.



Aaron Loyola O’Brien

Born: September 15, 1906 in Texarkana, Texas
Died: December 20, 1929, at age 23
21st HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: July 12, 1929
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-Fire House No. 19
Buried: Forest Park Cemetery, Lawndale,
Section I, Plot 248, Space 4627

Aaron O’Brien, five months into his career, died along with Michael Ward when Engine 19 was dispatched to a house fire located at Quitman Street and Clark Street. When crossing the double railroad tracks at Gregg Street, a short distance from Fire House No. 19, they were hit by a Southern Pacific Railroad train. Buildings at the crossing obstructed the view of the oncoming train and neither the red lights nor the swinging arms at the crossing were working. Aaron was riding on the side of the apparatus working the siren when he was thrown off and died instantly. Four members of the crew sustained minor injuries. Aaron was married at the time of his death. He and his wife, Melba, were expecting their first child. Patsy Margo O’Brien was born on Febuary 4, 1930, a month and a half after her father died.



Michael James Ward, Jr.

Born: January 2, 1895, in Evansville, Indiana
Died: December 21, 1929, at age 34
22nd HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: January 1, 1929
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-Fire House No. 14
Buried: St. Joseph Catholic Cemetery,
Evansville, Indiana, Section 9, Lot 69, Space 5

Michael Ward, eleven days from completing his first year in the Houston Fire Department, died with his friend Aaron O'Brien when Engine 19 was dispatched to a house fire located at Quitman Street and Clark Street. When crossing the double railroad tracks at Gregg Street, a short distance from Fire House No. 19, they were hit by a Southern Pacific Railroad train. Buildings at the crossing obstructed the view of the oncoming train and neither the red lights nor the swinging arm at the crossing were working. O'Brien died instantly and four crew members were injured and transported to local hospitals. Michael was visiting the fire house off-duty at the time the alarm came in and chose to ride Engine 19 to the fire when he was seriously injured and was taken to Memorial Baptist Hospital, where he died early the next morning.



Charles Roland "C. R." Rusk

Born: June 3, 1880, in Akron, Ohio
Died: June 8, 1932, at age 52
23rd HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: April 24, 1918
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-Fire House No. 14
Buried: Hollywood Cemetery, Section K, Space 105

Charles Rusk, a fourteen-year veteran, died when Ladder 14 struck a streetcar at the intersection of 17th Street and Yale Street, just a few blocks from Fire House No. 14. Rusk was transported to the Heights Clinic where attempts to save his life failed. Three firefighters were injured along with two passengers and the streetcar operator. Because of his failing eyesight Charles had been off work since November 21, 1931 and was due to retire. In May of 1932 he regained his eye sight and had just returned to duty on May 8th, exactly one month prior to his death. His son, Raymond, entered the Houston Fire Department eight years after his father's death, and retired in 1976 after thirty six years of service.



Esker Jackson "Jack" Rogers

Born: May 18, 1906, in Buckholts, Texas
Died: August 22, 1934, at age 28
24th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: September 1929
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-Fire House No. 24
Buried: Rosewood Cemetery, Humble, Texas,
Section 20, Plot 90, Space 2

The day of his accident, Esker was off-duty. He was asked by a friend to work his shift. Just as Esker relieved his friend, Engine 24 was dispatched to a call from a fire alarm box and was involved in a collision with a streetcar at Leeland Street and Jackson Street. The streetcar pulled in front of Engine 24 at the intersection. The driver turned sharply to avoid hitting the streetcar, but the fire truck slid sideways and slammed into the side of the streetcar. Esker was crushed between the streetcar and the fire truck. He was transported to the nearby St. Joseph Hospital where he died later that evening. His Captain, Merle London and two of the firefighters, Julius "Bubba" Arto and Willie Cross were seriously injured. The passengers and operator of the streetcar were not injured. After being relieved, his friend walked to the bus stop to head home and heard the crash, which was a few blocks away. Esker Rogers was survived by his wife, Jewel, and their two sons, Johnny and Billy, who were ages six and three at the time of their father's death.



Alfred Henry Schutze

Born: September 22, 1887, in Bastrop, Texas
Died: August 21, 1938, at age 50
25th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: November 5, 1917
Assignment: Battalion Chief-Fire House No. 7
Buried: Hollywood Cemetery, Section J, Plot 4, Space 1

Chief Schutze, with twenty-one years as a member of the Houston Fire Department, was dispatched to a garage apartment fire located at 2021 Bolsover Street and Hazard Street. He died when his apparatus hit an esplanade in the 5100 block of Main Street and Southmore Boulevard. The accident was at night, the amber warning light at the esplanade was not working and this caused the driver of the apparatus to be unable to see the obstruction. The firefighters on the apparatus were seriously injured and the driver received minor injuries. Chief Schutze was transported to the Methodist Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries. Chief Schutze was survived by Mary Leigh, his loving wife of twenty-eight years.



Walter William "Molly" Walker

Born: October 23, 1881, in Millican, Texas
Died: July 1, 1940, at age 58
26th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: March 1, 1914
Assignment: Driver-Fire House No. 2
Buried: Hollywood Cemetery,
Peaceful Valley, Plot 98, Space 5

Molly's assignment was at Fire House No. 2 driving the reserve engine the crew nicknamed "The Bulldog." The brand name of the engine was Mack and the Mack Truck Company used a small hood ornament shaped like a bulldog as their company symbol. The day of the accident, Tuesday, December 6, 1938, was Molly's scheduled day off. He took the place of a fellow firefighter, Hearn Hooker, who wanted the day off. Molly and "The Bulldog" were assigned to Fire House No. 17 for the day while their apparatus was at the repair shop for maintenance. While responding to a fire call, they hit a city bus at Harrisburg Street and Sampson Street. Molly sustained a head injury which resulted in a blood clot. Back then, there was not much the doctors could do. He was sent home and died as a result of his injuries nineteen months later. Early in his career, Molly raised rabbits behind Fire House No. 3. His fellow firefighters called him, "Molly Cottontail." Over time, the nickname became "Molly." The name was so much a part of him, his wife chose to have "Molly" engraved on his headstone.



Horace Oscar Gassoway

Born: July 18, 1904, in Winnsboro, Texas
Died: August 6, 1941, at age 37
27th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: September 1928
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-Fire House No. 10
Buried: Hollywood Cemetery, Section J, Plot 31, Space 1

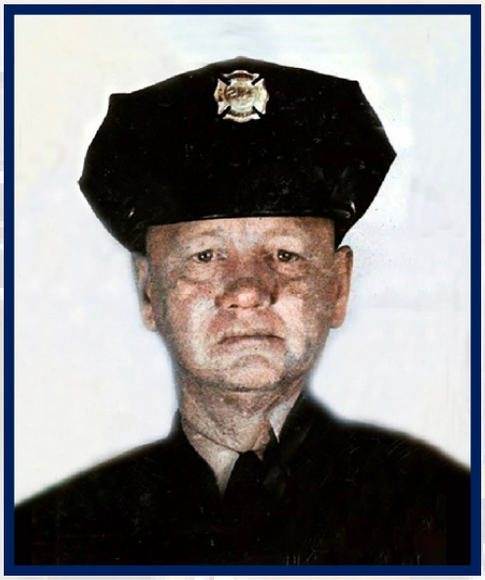
The day that Horace Gassoway died, he was working at the Central Fire Station, assigned to Service Truck 1. His regular assignment was Fire House No. 10. The crew was dispatched to a fire in the Weingarten's Grocery Store located at 4820 Washington Avenue and Preston Street. They were involved in a collision with Engine 2, also dispatched to the same fire. The two fire trucks entered the intersection of Smith Street and Preston Street at the same time. Four firefighters were injured; Horace died at the scene. Horace was survived by his wife of sixteen years,Velma Agnes, and their two daughters, Gloria Nell, age thirteen and Mary Lou, age eleven, at the time of their father's death.



James Edward "Jimmy" Lowth

Born: June 26, 1923, in Houston, Texas
Died: March 31, 1947, at age 23
28th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: January 16, 1946
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-Fire House No. 26
Buried: Hollywood Cemetery, Section F, Plot 19, Space 2

James Lowth was seriously injured when Engine 26 was struck by a steam powered Port Terminal Railroad Association train after being dispatched to a fire at the Eastern States Refinery. There were two things that contributed to the cause of the accident; the warning signal at the railroad crossing was not working and the PTRA Engineer, Oliver Florrow, was seated on the opposite side of the locomotive, and was unable to see Engine 26 attempting to cross the tracks. The accident occurred at 1000 Broadway Street and Bowie Street. Four of Lowth's crew members, Captain Mike Lathrop, J. B. Martin, Earl McWilliams, and Wilson Snow, all seriously injured, were transported to St. Joseph Hospital. Jimmy was also transported to St. Joseph Hospital where he died from his injuries. Jimmy survived World War II and returned home after serving in the United States Naval Reserves as a Radio Technician Second Class from May 29, 1942 to November 24, 1945. He died his first night back on duty since his wedding and honeymoon in Galveston, two weeks prior. He was survived by his wife of fifteen days, Peggy Leu.



John Benjamin "Red" Adams

Born: February 25, 1899, in Wheelock, Texas
Died: March 7, 1948, at age 49
29th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: January 22, 1941
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-Fire House No. 18
Buried: Forest Park Cemetery, Lawndale,
Section 24, Plot 345, Space 7

John Adams died at the scene of a house fire located at 2840 Lidstone Street and Old Spanish Trail. His crew found him on the ground next to Engine 18 having suffered a heart attack. Attempts by the Harris County Emergency Corps to revive him were unsuccessful. A physician who lived in the neighborhood pronounced him deceased. John was survived by his wife Pearl, their daughter Vera, and three sons, Wilfred, John, and James.



Vernon John Dorsett

Born: November 15, 1902, in Nacogdoches, Texas
Died: January 21, 1949, at age 46
30th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: December 5, 1919
Assignment: Assistant Chief-Central Fire Station
Buried: Rosewood Cemetery, Humble, Texas,
Section 20, Plot 81, Space 6

Chief Vernon Dorsett, with thirty years in the department, died in a vehicle collision after being dispatched to a fire at the Hub Lumber Company, located at 5519 Lawndale Street and Hub Street. The Chief's car slid on wet pavement at the intersection of Harrisburg Boulevard and Linwood Street and collided with a passenger car carrying a mother, her eighteen-month-old son and her twelve-year-old daughter, on their way to school. All three received minor cuts and bruises. Chief Dorsett died instantly, and his driver, Captain Walter Dudensing, was seriously injured. Chief Dorsett's daughter Barbara was due to be married in Freeport that evening. Vernon was planning to get off-duty early to drive her to her wedding. Barbara and her fiancé were married two weeks later. Chief Dorsett was survived by Glennie, his wife of twenty-seven years, and their two daughters, Charlotte age nineteen, and Barbara age seventeen. Vernon Dorsett was a well respected officer and known as a "Fireman's Fireman."



Robert Weir "Bobby" Milburn

Born: March 31, 1911, in Palestine, Texas
Died: April 14, 1949, at age 38
31st HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: September 4, 1933
Assignment: Driver-Fire House No. 7
Buried: South Park Cemetery, Pearland, Texas, Section J, Plot 227, Space 5

Bobby Milburn, the driver of Battalion Chief 7, collided with a pickup truck at the intersection of Fannin Street and McGowen Street. Fire House No. 7 received a signal from Fire Alarm Box 3423 located at McGowen Street and Sauer Street. The truck broadsided the Chief's car with such force; it pushed it far into the side street. Although Engine 7 and Ladder 7 were following the Chief's car through the intersection, they did not did not see the accident. Chief H. H. "Bubba" Finn and the driver of the pickup were seriously injured. Bobby Milburn was transported to Jefferson Davis Hospital where he was pronounced deceased on arrival. The crew of Fire House No. 7 was in the process of petitioning the city to have Fire Alarm Box 3423 removed due the high number of false alarms it received. Bobby was survived by his loving wife, Willa. They were married January 19, 1935. Also survived by his son, Ronald Gene, who was eight at the time of his father's untimely passing.



Joseph Earl "Bull" Connor

Born: April 18, 1900, in Houston, Texas
Died: January 31, 1951, at age 50
32nd HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: June 16, 1924
Assignment: Driver-Central Fire Station
Buried: Forest Park Cemetery, Lawndale, Gethsemane 55, Plot 257, Space 1

Joseph Connor, a soft-spoken man truly dedicated to his job, suffered a fatal heart attack while fighting a multiple alarm fire on January 31, 1951. Connor, who was driving Water Tower 1, had just finished getting the kinks out of the supply hoses when he fell against the apparatus. He was transported to Jefferson Davis Hospital where he was pronounced deceased on arrival. The fire involved the Alaskan Fur Factory located at 600 Main Street and Texas Avenue and two other businesses, the National Shirt Shop and Shaw's Jewelry Store. All three businesses were heavily damaged. This fire was especially difficult due to the freezing, icy weather which kept the smoke close to the ground. The fire also played a part in the death of Captain Rufus Templet.



Rufus John "Bullock" Templet

Born: October 4, 1894, in New Iberia, Louisiana
Died: March 12, 1951, at age 56
33rd HFD Line of Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: January 1, 1922
Assignment: Captain-Fire House No. 5
Buried: Forest Park Cemetery, Westheimer, Catacombs, Section 54, Plot 497, Space 12

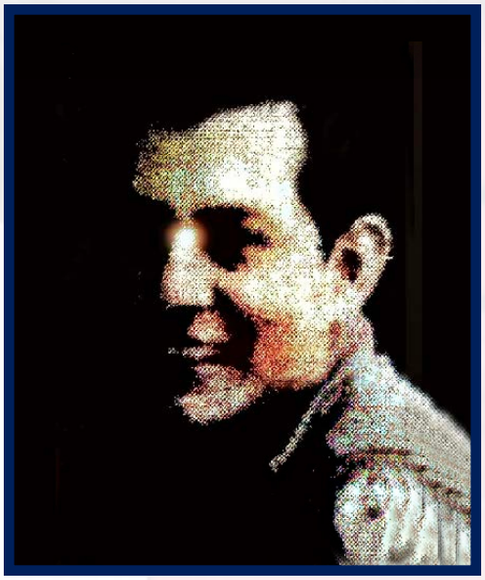
Captain Templet, a member of the Houston Fire Department for twenty-nine years, suffered a heart attack while fighting a multiple alarm fire on January 31, 1951. He was transported to the United States Veterans Administration Hospital where he died two months later. The fire involved the Alaskan Fur Factory located at 600 Main Street and Texas Avenue and two other businesses, the National Shirt Shop and Shaw's Jewelry Store. All three businesses were heavily damaged. This fire was especially difficult due to the freezing, icy weather which kept the smoke close to the ground. The fire was also responsible for the death of Joseph Connor. Rufus Templet was known as a dedicated firefighter and often responded to alarms off-duty. His wife, Lottie, was responsible for starting what became the Ladies Auxiliary Club.



Charley Albert Middlekauf

Born: February 7, 1888, in Canton, Illinois
Died: March 10, 1953, at age 65
34th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: January 1, 1910
Assignment: Assistant Chief-Central Fire Station
Buried: Forest Park Cemetery, Lawndale,
Section 24, Plot 124, Space 12S

Chief Middlekauf, a member of the Houston Fire Department for forty-three years, died of a heart attack on the scene of a fire at the Frederick Poultry and Egg Company, located at 1817 Center Street and Silver Street. One of his duties as Assistant Chief was directing firefighting efforts at multiple alarm fires. He had been commanding firefighters for some time when he fell to his knees and asked to be taken across the street to a neighbor's porch where he collapsed. Ambulance crews were unable to save him, and a physician on the scene pronounced him deceased. When Charley entered the Houston Fire Department in 1910, the department was equipped with only horse-drawn fire apparatus. He was survived by his loving wife, Alice, of eighteen years. Alice sadly died six months after Charley's death.



Fidel Chabolla

Born: April 24, 1918, in Union, Texas
Died: July 29, 1953, at age 35
35th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: October 4, 1951
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-Central Fire Station
Buried: Forest Park Cemetery, Lawndale,
Gethsemane 54, Plot 847, Space 5

Fidel Chabolla, died along with Joe Solito in a collision between Engine 8 and Ladder 1. The fire alarm box located at Gable Street and MKT Railroad transmitted an alarm which led to the collision of these two apparatus at the intersection of Preston Street and Crawford Street. Engine 10, the first due company, was on another assignment and was replaced by Engine 8. Ladder 1 had trouble starting and was delayed leaving quarters. This put both apparatus in the intersection at the same time. Seven firefighters were injured in the accident. Fidel was transported to Jefferson Davis Hospital where efforts to save him failed. This is the same intersection where Frank Cantino died five months later on January 7, 1954. The same building on the corner, the Southern Electric Supply Company at 1605 Preston Street was damaged in both accidents. The *Houston Chronicle* dubbed it the "Death Corner." Fidel was drafted into the United States Army, September 29, 1941. He served with 35th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Brigade until his discharge December 5, 1945. Fidel had recently returned from a three-month leave of absence where he and Lucette, his war-time bride visited her native France.



Joseph James "Joe" Solito

Born: August 24, 1914 in Lake Charles, Louisiana
Died: July 29, 1953, at age 38
36th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: 1938
Assignment: Driver-Fire House No. 8
Buried: Forest Park Cemetery, Lawndale,
Gethsemane 50, Plot 6, Space 6

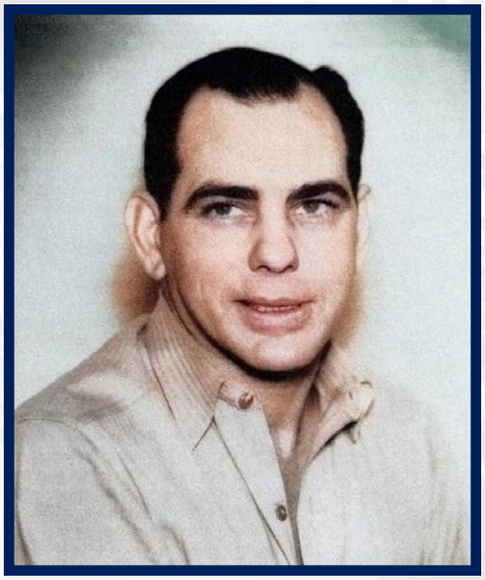
Joe Solito, died, along with Fidel Chabolla, in a collision between Engine 8 and Ladder 1. The fire alarm box at Gable Street and MKT Railroad transmitted an alarm which led to the the collision of these two apparatus at the intersection of Preston Street and Crawford Street. Engine 10, the first due company was on another assignment and was replaced by Engine 8. Ladder 1 had trouble starting and was delayed leaving quarters. This put both apparatus in the intersection at the same time. Seven firefighters were injured in the accident. Joe was transported to St. Joseph Hospital where efforts to save him failed. This is the same intersection where Frank Catino died five months later on January 7, 1954. The same building on the corner, the Southern Electric Supply Company at 1605 Preston Street was damaged in both accidents. The *Houston Chronicle* dubbed it the "Death Corner." Joe was drafted into the United States Army December 2, 1942, at age twenty-eight, he served with 65th Infantry Division and was discharged January 14, 1946. Joe served as president of the Houston Professional Firefighters Association, Local 341, from 1947 to 1950. He was survived by his wife of twelve years, Hazel.



Frank Catino

Born: February 10, 1892, on a boat from Sicily, Italy
Died: January 7, 1954, at age 61
37th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: May 15, 1911
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-Central Fire Station
Buried: Forest Park Cemetery, Lawndale, Gethsemane 55, Plot 1232, Space 11

Frank was born Arcangelo Cortimeglia. When he joined the department at age nineteen, Fire Chief Reginald "Kid" Ollre decided that his name was too hard for anyone to pronounce, so he changed his name to Frank Catino. Frank, a forty-two year veteran, died while responding to an alarm transmitted by the fire alarm box at Gable Street and MKT Railroad. Ladder 1 collided with a passenger car at Preston Street and Crawford Street. The car was occupied by two nineteen-year old men who were being chased by the police; both of whom died at the scene. Four members of the crew were sent to Jefferson Davis Hospital and were treated and released. Frank succumbed to his injuies prior to arrival at St. Joseph's Hospital. On July 29, 1953, Frank was injured at the same intersection, while responding to an alarm from the same fire alarm box, Gable Street and MKT Railroad. This is where Joseph Solito and Fidel Chabolla died. The same building on the corner, the Southern Electric Supply Company at 1605 Preston Street was damaged in both accidents. The *Houston Chronicle* dubbed it the "Death Corner." Frank was survived by his wife of 27 years, Stella. The also had one son, Joe.



Woodrow Wilson Erwin

Born: March 2, 1914, in Palestine, Texas
Died: February 24, 1954, at age 39
38th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: July 8, 1940
Assignment: Chauffeur-Fire House No. 24
Buried: Forest Park Cemetery, Lawndale, Section 31, Plot 518, Space 1

Woodrow Erwin died of a heart attack after fighting a house fire located at 2705 Clay Street and Nagle Street. That day as the Acting Captain, Woodrow and Engine 24 were dispatched to a fire that involved a small shack located in a junkyard. Immediately after the fire was extinguished, he complained of a sharp pain in his chest and asked to be taken to the hospital. On the way to Jefferson Davis Hospital, he asked the attendants to call his wife and have her meet him at the hospital. He died just minutes before his wife's arrival. On April 23, 1942, Woodrow, at age 18, was drafted into the United States Naval Reserves, during World War II. He received his discharge September 12, 1945 and returned to the ranks of the Houston Fire Department. He was survived by his wife, Mabel, and their daughter Joan.



Delbert Harvey Sherfy

Born: April 19, 1913, in Houston, Texas
Died: October 31, 1954, at age 41
39th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: June 25, 1941
Assignment: Chauffeur-Fire House No. 17
Buried: Cleveland Memorial Cemetery, Cleveland, Texas, Section 1, Lot 103, Space 4

Delbert Sherfy was part of the crew of Engine 17 dispatched to wash down fuel at an accident. On the way to the scene, the fire apparatus collided with a passenger car at Canal Street and Sampson Street. Delbert died at the scene; both occupants of the car, and four firefighters were injured. He was survived by his wife of seventeen years, Lenna. They had two children, Daniel Harvey and Sarah Ann, who were ages sixteen and thirteen at the time of their father's death. Delbert's Grandfather, Henry Donnelly, served the Houston Fire Department for fifty years from 1895 to 1945, retiring at the age of seventy-eight. Before Henry joined the ranks of the Houston Fire Department, he was a paid driver for the Houston Volunteer Hose Company No. 9. Delbert's uncle, Eddie, served the department from 1923 to 1945.



William Henry “Bill” Kersten

Born: November 6, 1914, in Houston, Texas
Died: December 18, 1954, at age 40
40th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: December 11, 1941
Assignment: Chauffeur-Fire House No. 19
Buried: Woodland Gardens of Memories Cemetery, Section 56, Plot 116, Space 3D

William Kersten, the driver of District Chief 19, was dispatched to a house fire located at 7306 Bonham Street and Harbor Street. When entering the intersection of Lockwood Drive and Lyons Avenue the chief’s car collided with a Houston Transit Company bus. The Chief and three bus passengers were injured. Bill was transported to Jefferson Davis Hospital where he did not survive his injuries. He had five minutes left on his shift when the alarm was dispatched. Bill was drafted into the United States Army Air Forces on October 31, 1942 and served his country during World War II until being discharged from the military January 19, 1946. Bill was survived by his wife of fifteen years, Elsie Elisabeth.



Willis Neal “Bardoil” McWhorter

Born: April 17, 1927, in Madisonville, Texas
Died: November 6, 1959, at age 32
41st HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: June 1, 1953
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-Fire House No. 30
Buried: Resthaven Cemetary, Memorial Gardens, Plot 72, Space 1

Willis McWhorter died in an accident that claimed the life of his fellow crew member, Charles Jedlicka, and seriously injured the captain and his chauffeur. Engine 30 was responding to a house fire located at 7320 Airline Drive and Benbrook Street. The accident occurred at the intersection of Fulton Street and Berry Street. An approaching transport truck, carrying steel beams, saw Engine 30 but was unable to stop due to its heavy load. The fire apparatus was broadsided, breaking it into several pieces. McWhorter died at the scene. He was survived by his wife of ten years, Betty Jean, they had a daughter and a son.



D. H. “Jim” Chandler, Jr.

Born: December 13, 1932, in Rusk, Texas
Died: November 9, 1959, at age 26
42nd HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: July 1, 1958
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-Fire House No. 19
Buried: Lyles-Sanders Cemetery, Sulphur Springs, Texas, Plot 325

D.H. and his crew responded to the Hess Terminal located on Federal Road for a fire on board the “Amoco Virginia.” The 150,000-gallon tanker was in the process of loading a cargo of aviation fuel. A worker loading the ship did not realize there was a small hole in the hose leaking fuel into the water below. A lantern on a passing tugboat ignited the fuel, causing an explosion and fire that took sixteen hours and five hundred firefighters to control. Seven men on the ship perished and forty workers, including several fighters were injured. During the cleanup process, the mangled deck was coated with firefighting foam, Chandler fell through a large gaping hole in the deck and drowned in the contents of the ship’s hold. He was a diver in the United States Navy but did not survive due to the lack of buoyancy of the fuel. D.H. enlisted in the United States Naval Reserve August 16, 1951, and was discharged August 15, 1959.



Charles Alphonse “Jed” Jedlicka

Born: September 27, 1922, in Cameron, Texas
Died: November 17, 1959, at age 37
43rd HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: June 1, 1953
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-Fire House No. 30
Buried: Brookside Cemetery, Section 2, Plot 159, Space 1

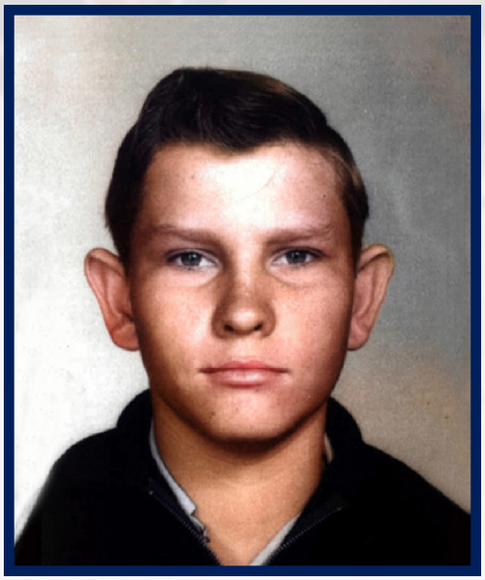
Charles Jedlicka died after sustaining severe injuries in an accident that also claimed the life of Willis McWhorter and seriously injured the captain and his chauffeur. Engine 30 was responding to a house fire located at 7320 Airline Drive and Benbrook Street. The accident occurred at the intersection of Fulton Street and Berry Street as an approaching transport truck loaded with steel beams, saw Engine 30 but was unable to stop due to its heavy load. The fire apparatus was broadsided, breaking it into several pieces. Due to the severity of his injuries, Jed was transferred to Brooks Army Medical Center at Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, Texas on a plane owned by a local oil company. Eleven days later he succumbed to his injuries. In 1940, at the of age eighteen Jed became a member of the United States Naval Reserves and served during World War II. His group protected cargo ships to keep them from being sunk by German submarines. In 1943, at the age of twenty-one, he returned to the United States and was discharged and returned home. He was survived by his wife of twelve-years, Helen, and their two daughters, Vicki and Malissa “Missi,” who were eight years and four months old respectfully at the time of their father’s untimely death.



Dominic Joseph “Dom” Contorno

Born: March 12, 1911, in Houston, Texas
Died: May 21, 1962, at age 51
44th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: December 16, 1941
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-Fire House No. 37
Buried: Forest Park Cemetery, Lawndale, Gethsemane 55, Plot 1099, Space 4

Dom Contorno, a member of the department for twenty-one years, suffered a massive heart attack while fighting a two-alarm fire located at the Wanda Petroleum Company on Almeda Genoa Road. The combination of the heat that day and the physical exertion proved to be too much for Dom’s heart. He was transported to St. Joseph Hospital where the doctors knew he was in serious condition. They were in disbelief how the heart attack did not kill him instantly. Dom had a family at home and a very strong will to live that kept him alive for nineteen days. Dom was survived by his wife of twenty-five years, Jane. They had one son, Donald Gene, who was twenty-one years old at the time of his father’s death.



Claude Jackson Hopkins

Born: January 20, 1932, in Bryan, Texas
Died: June 30, 1962, at age 30
45th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: November 1, 1956
Assignment: Chauffeur-Fire House No. 2
Buried: Willowhole Cemetery, North Zulch, Texas, Section C, Space 359

On Friday, June 29, 1962, Ladder 2 responded to a sprinkler alarm located at the Bayou Products Company, located at 1209 Commerce Street and San Jacinto Street. The apparatus hit a transport truck carrying grain at the intersection of Preston Street and Louisiana Street. Four firefighters were transported to Jefferson Davis Hospital. Claude, severely injured, died the next day. The alarm was false, caused when a vagrant attempted to get a drink from a drain valve of the sprinkler system. Claude graduated from Jefferson Davis High School in Houston, Texas in 1950. Soon after high school, Claude joined the United States Navy on March 19, 1951. He received his discharge on March 15, 1955, obtaining the rank of Machinery Repairman Second Class. He was survived by Delores, his wife of ten years, and their two children, Deborah Lynn and Kenneth Ray.



Steve Charlie Baranowski

Born: July 9, 1907, in Chappell Hill, Texas
Died: February 3, 1969, at age 61
46th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: December 11, 1941
Assignment: Captain-Fire House No. 37
Buried: Forest Park Cemetery, Westheimer, Section 502, Plot 168, Space 2

Captain Baranowski, a twenty-eight year veteran, died of a heart attack at the scene of a house fire located at 3931 Underwood Street and Stella Link Road. Captain Baranowski and his crew were on the roof pulling off shingles when he became unconscious. His crew attempted to save him with a new life saving technique called "CPR." Steve was transported to Methodist Hospital where he was pronounced deceased. Steve was survived by Nancy, his wife of forty years, and his three daughters, Francis, Flora Lee, and Mary Louise.



James Louis Walls, Jr.

Born: March 8, 1945, in Elizabeth City, Virginia
Died: May 3, 1971, at age 26
47th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: May 5, 1969, Class 69D
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-Fire House No. 51 "A" Shift
Buried: Memorial Oaks Cemetery, Section 7, Plot 61, Space 2

James Walls died while driving Ambulance 1128 which was struck by a passenger vehicle at the intersection of Chimney Rock Road and Westheimer Road. At this point in time, the Houston Fire Department's Emergency Medical Service, which began providing service on April 1, 1971, had twenty-one light duty Dodge vans in service. The small size of the van was found to be a contributing factor in the death of Walls. Soon after the accident the HFD purchased twenty two heavy duty modular ambulances. The news media soon dubbed these units "an emergency room on wheels." James enlisted into the United States Navy December 2, 1965. He was discharged October 17, 1968. He was survived by his wife of two years Betty, and their daughter, Theresa, who was an infant at the time of her father's death.



Truxton Joseph Hathaway, Jr.

Born: January 9, 1940, in Houston, Texas
Died: October 19, 1971, at age 31
48th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: February 15, 1961
Assignment: Fire Inspector-Fire Training Academy
Buried: Forest Park Cemetery, Lawndale, Gethsemane 55, Plot 491, Space 8

Truxton Hathaway was a Fire Inspector temporarily assigned to the Fire Training Academy. An eighty-two-car Missouri Pacific Railroad train derailed near Mykawa Road; and he went out to the scene to record the incident for future training. Two tank cars containing vinyl chloride and butadiene, caught fire and exploded. Forty minutes later, a second blast occurred, killing Truxton and injuring twenty-seven firefighters, six members of the news media, one HPD officer, and two civilians.

To this day, the film footage recorded by the news media that day, is used for training all over the country. Truxton was survived by his wife of ten years, Marjorie Ann, and two children, Chris and Phillp, ages eight and six years old. Marjorie's dad, Richard Henning also served with the Houston Fire Department.



Lewis Washington "Bo" Richardson

Born: January 18, 1916, in Groveton, Texas
Died: February 3, 1973, at age 57
49th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: August 1, 1941
Assignment: Captain-Fire House No. 7 "A" Shift
Buried: Forest Park Cemetery, Lawndale,
Section J, Plot 144, Space 5

Lewis Richardson perished as a result of a heart attack while fighting an intense apartment fire located at 1400 Richmond Avenue and Upon Street. Captain Richardson and his crew were attacking the fire from inside one of the apartment units when he emerged from the apartment complaining of chest pain. He collapsed on scene and was transported to Ben Taub Hospital where attempts to revive him were unsuccessful.

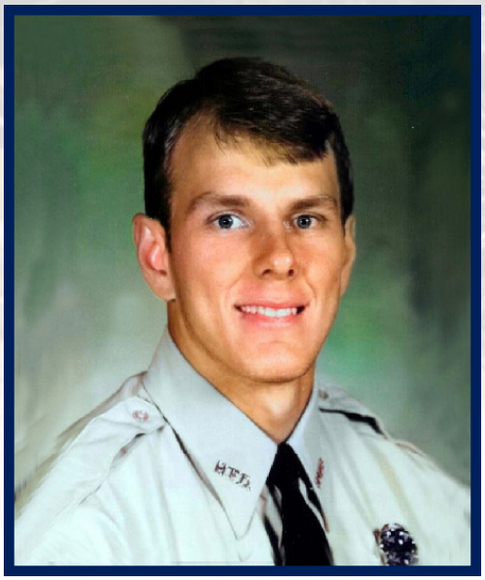
Lewis enlisted into the United States Army, September 20, 1942, serving during World War II. He was discharged and came home in January of 1946. He was survived by his wife of twenty-seven years, Dreba, and their daughter Randi, who was twenty-five years old at the time of her father's death.



Jackie Dunham Ludwick

Born: August 17, 1933, in Austin, Texas
Died: February 4, 1977, at age 43
50th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: July 16, 1956
Assignment: Senior Captain-Fire House No. 7 "B" Shift
Buried: Woodlawn Cemetery,
Section 8, Plot 154, Space 3A

Jackie Ludwick was a well-respected officer in the department. Months before his death, he saved the lives of several firefighters at St. Joseph Hospital. While working to extinguish a deep-seated fire in the laundry duct system, Captain Ludwick knew something was wrong and began getting firefighters out of the vent system when a flashover occurred. Several firefighters were injured, but his actions saved their lives. Jackie Ludwick suffered a fatal heart attack while fighting a fire located at 3700 Wheeler Avenue and Scott Street. He was transported to Hermann Hospital where efforts to save him failed. He was survived by his loving wife, of twenty Four years, Laverne and their three sons, Tracy, Kelly and Jody.



Thomas Norwood "Tommy" Cooper

Born: February 17, 1959, in Pine Bluff, Arkansas
Died: September 23, 1982, at age 23
51st HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: February 8, 1982, Class 82A
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-
Fire House No. 1 "C" Shift
Buried: Memorial Oaks Cemetery,
Section 2, Plot 69, Space 6

Thomas Cooper was critically injured after falling off the tailboard of Engine 1 while responding to a trash fire. Cooper was training with his crew on different types of hose lays when they were dispatched. The rolled hoses used in the drill were placed on the tailboard where he was riding. As Engine 1 turned the corner at Hamilton Street and Congress Avenue, one of the rolled hoses fell off the back of the apparatus. Tommy fell off the tailboard while trying to stop the falling hose and hit his head on the curb. The driver and captain did not know he had fallen. A city electrician saw the accident and stopped to help and report the accident. Ambulance 1101 transported him to Hermann Hospital where he died two days later. Tommy was survived by his father, George Cooper and mother, Gladys Foster.



Lonnie Franklin

Born: November 14, 1929, in Houston, Texas
Died: January 4, 1983, at age 53
52nd HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: August 5, 1950
Assassignment: District Chief-Fire House No. 7 "B" Shift
Buried: Resthaven Memorial Gardens Cemetery,
Section 7, Plot 78, Space 4

Chief Franklin died while responding to a house fire located at 2800 Dowling Street and Drew Street. The District Chief's car was broadsided by a pick-up truck which had ran the stop sign at the intersection of Elgin Street and Hutchins Street. Engine 7 and Ladder 7 were seconds behind. The engine crew stopped to render aid while the ladder truck proceeded to the fire. Lonnie was transported by Ambulance 25 to Hermann Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries. The driver of the pick-up truck was speeding because he was late for work. He was later found guilty of Negligent Homicide. The cause of the house fire was ruled arson. Chief Franklin was survived by his childhood sweetheart, Kathrine, and four children. Lonnie, Michael, Tommy and Judy.



Robert Munguia Reyes

Born: August 30, 1952, in Houston, Texas
Died: December 1, 1984, at age 32
53rd HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: January 26, 1981, Class 81A
Assignment: Pipe and Ladderman-
Fire House No. 62 "A" Shift
Buried: Memorial Oaks Cemetery,
Section 11, Plot 42, Space 3B

On day of his death, Robert Reyes was assigned to work his shift at Fire House No. 15. Engine 15 responded to a car fire on Interstate 45. Before the crew arrived at the scene Robert fell to his death from the jump seat of Engine 15. Reyes spent ten years working for the Federal Bureau of Investigation before joining the Houston Fire Department. His son, Robert, was six years old at the time of his Father's death. In 2007, Robert followed in his dad's footsteps and joined the ranks of the Houston Fire Department.



Ruben Lopez

Born: October 12, 1957, in Victoria, Texas
Died: December 4, 1996, at age 39
1st Houston Volunteer Fire Department Line of Duty Death
Assignment: HVFD District Chief-Engine 25
Buried: Forest Park Cemetery, Lawndale,
Section 12, Lot 385, Space 11

Ruben Lopez, a member of the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, died fighting a house fire located at 4006 Roseneath Drive and South MacGregor Way. Upon arrival, Chief Lopez and the crew of Engine 25 were informed that there were still victims in the home. A flashover occurred during the search. Chief Lopez perished along with the forty-one year old female occupant of the home, who had re-entered the home thinking her twelve year old daughter was still inside. Ruben received the organization's Volunteer Firefighter of the Year Award. Chief Lopez is the only line of duty death in the history of the Houston Volunteer Fire Department. In 2023 Ruben's son, Joey, became a proud member of the Houston Fire Department.



Steven Clyde "Steve" Mayfield

Born: October 5, 1951, in Pasadena, Texas
Died: December 2, 1998, at age 47
54th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: March 31, 1975, Class 75A
Assignment: Firefighter-Crash Rescue Station No. 92 "B" Shift
Buried: Resthaven Cemetery, Section 7, Lot 587, Space 12

Steven Mayfield, a twenty-three year veteran, died from a heart attack while participating in a live burn at the DFW Airport in Dallas, Texas. The burn was a part of the annual recertification process required of all Airport Rescue Firefighters (ARFF). Mayfield, a certified Firefighter (ARFF) for eight-years, had previously spent twelve years as a paramedic. He was assigned as a paramedic on Medic 92,which makes calls at the terminals at George Bush Intercontinental Airport. Steve was survived by his wife of twenty-six years Jo, and their daughter Stacy.



Kimberly Ann "Kim" Smith

Born: November 20, 1969, in El Paso, Texas
Died: February 14, 2000, at age 30
55th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: April 11, 1994, Class 94A
Assignment: Firefighter-Fire House No. 76 "C" Shift
Buried: Mt. Calvary Catholic Cemetery, Refugio, Texas, far left corner, between her Grandparents Beatrice and Lewis Zarsky

At 0433 hours Engine 76 responded to a fire in a McDonald's Restaurant, located at 12602 Bissonnet Street and Dairy View Lane, less than a mile from their quarters. Upon arrival, Engine 76 reported the fire was coming from the roof of the restaurant. The crew of Engine 76 entered the building and started to advance the hose line to the back of the restaurant. The section of the roof that contained the air conditioning units collapsed, trapping and injuring Mayo. Kim, also trapped, was able to free herself and head toward the back door of the building. Kim was found deceased eight feet from the back door. Lewis was rescued and transported to Memorial Hermann Hospital where efforts to save him failed. The fire was ruled as arson, started by four young males attempting to break into the office safe. When unable to open the safe, they set the office on fire. All four men were convicted of multiple crimes with sentences ranging from two to thirty-five years in prison. Kim took the Civil Service promotional examination for Engineer/Operator in August of 1999; she was promoted posthumously on September 1, 2001. Kim's badge, number 3972 was presented to her parents, Roseann and Don Smith. Kim was survived by her parents, Roseann and Don, and her siblings Pam Bryan and Suzette Klien.



Lewis Evans Mayo, III

Born: December 13, 1955, in Cocoa, Florida
Died: February 14, 2000, at age 44
56th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: June 29, 1981, Class 81C
Assignment: Firefighter-Fire House No. 76 "A" Shift
Buried: Memorial Oaks Cemetery, Section 219, Lot 8, Space 2

Lewis Mayo died with his crew member Kim Smith. At 0433 hours Engine 76 responded to a fire in a McDonald's Restaurant, located at 12602 Bissonnet Street and Dairy View Lane, less than a mile from their quarters. Upon arrival, Engine 76 reported the fire was coming from the roof of the restaurant. The crew of Engine 76 entered the building and attempted to get the hose line to the back of the restaurant. The section of the roof that contained the air conditioning units collapsed, trapping and injuring Lewis. Smith, also trapped, was able to free herself and head toward the back door of the building. Kim was found deceased eight feet away from the back door. Lewis was rescued and transported to Memorial Hermann Hospital where efforts to save him failed. The fire was ruled as arson, started by four males attempting to break into the office safe. When they were unable to open the safe, they set the office on fire. All four men were convicted of multiple crimes with sentences ranging from two to thirty-five years in prison. Lewis was survived by his wife Wendy, of twenty four years. They had two sons, Richard, age twenty three, and Eric, age twenty. Also a daughter, Vanessa, age thirteen.



Jay Paul Jahnke

Born: September 16, 1961, in Houston, Texas
Died: October 13, 2001, at age 40
57th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: April 20, 1982, Class 81E
Assignment: Captain-Fire House No. 2 "B" Shift
Buried: Memorial Oaks Cemetery,
Section 212, Lot 138, Space 4D,
next to, Claude, his loving father

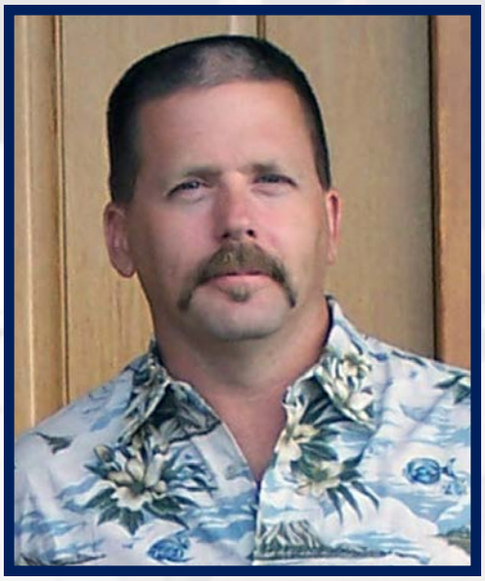
At 0453 hours, Engine 2 responded to a report of a fire in the Four-Leaf Towers, a high-rise residential building located at 5110 San Felipe Street and South Post Oak Lane. On arrival, the firefighters received a report that the male occupant was still in the unit on the fifth floor. Upon entering the unit, they encountered moderate heat and heavy smoke and the fire had broken one of the windows. The initial search did not locate the resident, who was later found deceased. Two of the firefighters were running low on air and were sent to the stairwell. Captain Jahnke then decided that he and Senior Captain Robert Green from Ladder 28 should do the same. Upon exiting, the hose line did not clear the apartment's self closing door, and the door did not completely shut. Simultaneously, a cold front came through, causing high winds, pushing the smoke and fire out into the hall where the two captains were attempting to escape. Captain Jahnke became disoriented and followed the hose line in the direction of the fire. He transmitted a "Mayday" and was found a few minutes later. He was carried down and transported to Memorial Hermann Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries. Jay was survived by his wife, Dawn, and his daughter Jayne and son Hunter, who were ages eleven and eight at the time of their father's untimely death.



Kevin Wayne Kulow

Born: November 2, 1971, in Bellville, Texas
Died: April 4, 2004, at age 32
58th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: September 15, 2003, Class 23
Assignment: Firefighter-Fire House No. 50 "A" Shift
Buried: Sealy Public Cemetery, Sealy, Texas,
Section 17, Lot 423B, Space 8

Kevin Kulow started his work day a bit early just like all the "rookies." He arrived at the fire house and took off the gear of the "B" Shift firefighter he was relieving. Soon after that, at 5:55 AM, Engine 50 was dispatched to 7610 Kempwood Drive and Wirt Road for a truck fire involving hazardous chemicals. However, upon arrival they discovered a fire in the El Festival Ballroom, an after-hours night club. Civilians at the location reported that they were not sure everyone got out of the building safely. While searching for victims the fire intensified and the crew members found their hose and followed it to safety. While exiting the building, they realized that Kevin did not get out with them. By that time the fire had burned through the ceiling and roof. Kevin was unable to find his way out of the building. During the investigation, it was determined that the arsonist had thrown several full one-gallon plastic gasoline containers on to the roof. The fire, set because of a domestic dispute, was ruled arson. Three men and one woman were charged and convicted of the murder of Firefighter Kevin Kulow. The ringleader, Jeremy Robinson, a career criminal, was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole. The other three received sentences ranging from three to forty years in prison.



Grady Don Burke

Born: January 31, 1966, in Houston, Texas
Died: February 19, 2005, at age 39
59th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: March 3, 1993, Class 93B
Assignment: Captain-Fire House No. 46 "B" Shift
Buried: Forest Park East Cemetery, Webster, Texas,
Section 216B, Lot 4, Space 2

Grady Burke, a twelve year veteran, died while fighting a fire in a vacant house located at 8510 Brandon Street and Bellfort Avenue. The vacant house was entered by a vagrant who started a fire for heat and illumination. When the fire got out of control, he exited the house and boarded a Metro Bus. The alert bus driver saw him leave the smoking house and called 911. The roof collapsed almost immediately as Captain Burke and his crew entered the structure. Two crew members narrowly escaped through a window. Six firefighters were injured and transported to Memorial Hermann Hospital. The man that started the fire was caught, pled guilty to manslaughter and was sentenced to twelve years in prison. Grady was a member of the Texas City Fire Department for four years before he joined the ranks of the Houston Fire Department. In 2004, Captain Burke was awarded the Unit Valor award along with his crew for saving an eighty-year-old woman from her burning apartment. Grady was survived by his wife of twelve years, Cindy. They were blessed with three children, Hannah, Hailey and Hunter. At the time of Grady's death, they were ages ten, eight and seven.



Damion Jon Hobbs

Born: December 24, 1978, in Galveston, Texas
Died: April 12, 2009, at age 30
60th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: March 3, 2009, Class 2008C
Assignment: Firefighter-Fire House No. 26 "B" Shift
Buried: South Park Cemetery, Pearland, Texas, Garden of Eternal Love, Lot 53, Space 5

Damion Hobbs died along with Captain Harlow in a house fire located at 7811 Oak Vista and Poplar Street on Easter morning. Engine 26 entered the structure to search for the occupants of the home. Wind driven fire conditions produced a rapid-fire growth that forced Harlow and Hobbs to withdraw and they collapsed while attempting to exit. They both were quickly found; however, efforts to resuscitate failed. Hobbs served two tours of duty in Iraq with the United States Army and Texas Natioanl Guard. He was at the Val Jahnke Training Facility as a member of Class 2004-34 when he was deployed the second time with his unit, the 36th CAB 1149th AVB out of Ellington. Upon his return, he became a member of Class 2008C and graduated March 3, 2009. Damion was survived by the love of lis life, Crystal, his father, Jon, sisters Janice, Tammy and Sheila.



James Arthur Harlow, Sr.

Born: May 18, 1958, in Beeville, Texas
Died: April 12, 2009, at age 50
61st HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: December 27, 1979, Class 79D
Assignment: Captain-Fire House No. 26 "B" Shift
Buried: Grand View Cemetery, Pasadena, Texas, Garden of Prayer, Lot 584, Space 2

Captain Harlow, a thirty-year veteran, died with his "rookie" Firefighter Damion Hobbs in a house fire located at 7811 Oak Vista and Poplar Street on Easter morning. Captain Harlow entered the structure with his crew to search for the occupants of the home. Wind driven fire conditions produced a rapid-fire growth that forced Harlow and Hobbs to withdraw and they collapsed while attempting to exit. They both were quickly found; however efforts to resuscitate failed. A devoted husband, father and grandfather, James was a respectable and approachable captain. He had an open door policy and his crew members were always comfortable approaching him. He was a perpetual optimist. He always said in an East Texas accent, "Everything is going to be alright." At his memorial service, his family was presented with the Houston Fire Department's Medal of Honor, posthumously. James was survived by his wife Debbie, daughter Brandy and two sons James Jr. and Travis.



Cohnway Matthew Johnson

Born: October 4, 1982, in Austin, Texas
Died: May 4, 2009, at age 26
62nd HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: April 20, 2009
Assignment: Cadet-VJTF, Class 2009C
Buried: Cook-Walden Capital Parks Cemetery, Pflugerville, Texas, Section H, Lot 1608, Space 3

From a young age Cohnway had known that he wanted to be a firefighter. He was following in his great uncle's footsteps, a Chief with Austin Fire Department. Before being chosen to join the Houston Fire Department he served full time with two other departments, the Yoakum Fire Department and Travis County Emergency Services District No. 3 Oak Hill Fire Department, Austin, Texas. On the morning of April 29, 2009, Cadet Johnson collapsed during physical training and was transported to Memorial Hermann Hospital in the Medical Center. Five days later he lost his battle for life due to complications of hyperthermia, dehydration and heatstroke. Cohnway was survived by his parents, Mike and Candy Johnson. Also, his brother Christopher.



Thomas William “Bill” Dillion

Born: March 25, 1962, in Houston, Texas
Died: March 14, 2012, at age 49
63rd HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: June 5, 1989, Class 89C
Assignment: Senior Captain-Fire House No. 69 “B” Shift
Buried: Memorial Oaks Cemetery, Morning Tide, Section 303, Lot 16, Space 5

Senior Captain Dillion suffered a heart attack at a fire in the Jadestone Apartments, 7520 Cook Road and Winding Passage Street. After the fire was under control, he began experiencing chest pains and collapsed. Firefighters performed CPR and he was transported to West Houston Medical Center where efforts to revive him failed. At the time of the incident, he was working at Fire House No. 76. Bill was survived by his two sons, David and Matt, and daughter Katelyn.



Anne McCormick “Punky” Sullivan

Born: December 4, 1988 in Houston, Texas
Died: May 31, 2013, at age 24
64th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: April 11, 2013, Class 2013A
Assignment: Firefighter-Fire House No. 68 “A” Shift
Buried: Glenwood Cemetery, Fireman’s Plot, Section C, Plot 98, West Half
Buried: Grandview Cemetery, Salem, Ohio, Section 18, Lot 56, Grave 2, with her Grandfather, Thomas Castlen Moore

Anne died along with Matt Renaud, Bobby Bebee and Bobby Garner while fighting a fire located at the Southwest Inn, 6855 Southwest Freeway and Hornwood Drive. The fire started in the Bhojan Indian Restaurant, located in the front of the motel complex. Fifteen minutes after crews arrived, the roof collapsed, trapping five firefighters. Before the rescuers were able to reach the firefighters, a second ceiling collapsed, trapping all of the rescuers. The rescuers were able to escape the collapse along with Captain Dowling, one of the five trapped firefighters. Anne graduated on April 11, 2013 from the Val Jahnke Training Facility. She had worked eleven shifts before her death. She was a member of the Community Volunteer Fire Department and the Stafford Volunteer Fire Department. Anne, at age seventeen knew that her career path would be that of a firefighter. Anne was survived by her parents, Mary and Jack Sullivan, and her siblings, William, Thomas and Kate.



Robert Herman “Bobby” Garner, IV

Born: April 14, 1984, in Port Arthur, Texas
Died: May 31, 2013, at age 29
65th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: October 18, 2010, Class 2010B
Assignment: Firefighter-Fire House No. 68 “A” Shift
Buried: Forest Park Cemetery, Westheimer, Section 500, Lot 64, Space 10

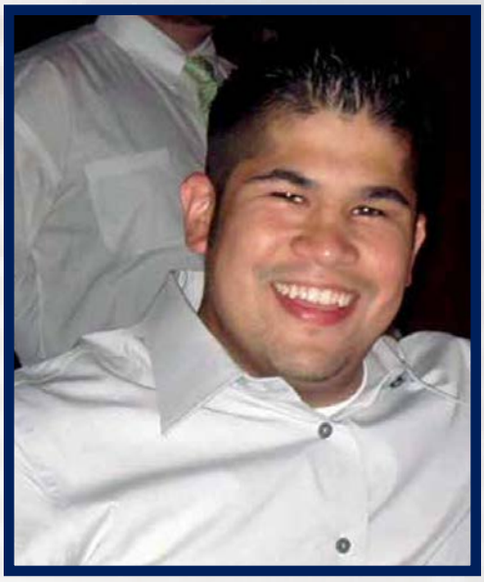
Bobby Garner died along with Matt Renaud, Bobby Bebee and Anne Sullivan while fighting a fire located at the Southwest Inn, 6855 Southwest Freeway and Hornwood Drive. The fire started in the Bhojan Indian Restaurant, located in the front of the motel complex. Fifteen minutes after crews arrived, the roof collapsed, trapping five firefighters. Before the rescuers were able to reach the firefighters, a second ceiling collapsed, trapping all of the rescuers. The rescuers were able to escape the collapse along with Captain Dowling, one of the five trapped firefighters. Before becoming a proud member of the Houston Fire Department, Robert served in the United States Air Force for six years as a SRA (Senior Airman). He volunteered for two tours of duty in Iraq. Bobby is the beloved brother to his three sisters, Nicole, Liz, and Lauren.



Robert Ryan "Bobby" Bebee, Jr.

Born: January 14, 1972, in Corpus Christi, Texas
Died: May 31, 2013, at age 41
66th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: June 20, 2002, Class 7 2001
Assignment: Engineer-Operator
Fire House No. 51 "A" Shift
Buried: South Park Cemetery, Pearland, Texas, Section A, Lot 29, Space 2

Bobby Bebee died along with Matt Renaud, Bobby Garner and Anne Sullivan while fighting a fire located at the Southwest Inn, 6855 Southwest Freeway and Hornwood Drive. The fire started in the Bhojan Indian Restaurant, located in the front of the motel complex. Fifteen minutes after crews arrived, the roof collapsed, trapping five firefighters. Before the rescuers were able to reach the firefighters, a second ceiling collapsed, trapping all of the rescuers. The rescuers were able to escape the collapse along with Captain Dowling, one of the five trapped firefighters. Bobby's compassion and commitment to the community extended well beyond the fire service through his work helping homeless citizens and animals.



Matthew Rena "Matt" Renaud

Born: July 2, 1977, in Houston, Texas
Died: May 31, 2013, at age 35
67th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: October 30, 2001, Class 8 2001
Assignment: Captain-Fire House No. 51 "A" Shift
Buried: Forest Park Cemetery, Lawndale, Section 39, Lot BE (Bench Estate) 8, Space 1 Lower

Matt Renaud perished along with Bobby Bebee, Bobby Garner and Anne Sullivan while fighting a fire located at the Southwest Inn, 6855 Southwest Freeway and Hornwood Drive. The fire started in the Bhojan Indian Restaurant, which was in the front of the motel complex. Fifteen minutes after crews arrived, the roof collapsed, trapping five firefighters. Before the rescuers were able to reach the firefighters, a second ceiling collapsed, trapping all of the rescuers. They were able to escape the collapse along with Captain Dowling, one of the five trapped firefighters.

Prior to his death Matt took the Civil Service exam for Senior Captain, he placed fourth and knew he was guaranteed a promotion. Soon after his death he was promoted posthumously to the rank of Senior Captain. Matt was a big astros fan, every year his brother David and their core group of friends attended a game when the Astros were on the road. In his memory they continue this tradition and it is now called "The Matthew Trip." Matt was survived by his parents, Barbara and Xavier and his brother David, and lots of aunts, uncles and cousins!



Daniel David "Danny" Groover

Born: December 15, 1967, in Jacinto City, Texas
Died: July 9, 2014, at age 46
68th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: February 15, 1993, Class 93B
Assignment: Firefighter-Fire House No. 104 "C" Shift
Buried: Houston National Cemetery, Section G4, Site 1145

Daniel Groover died while fighting a house fire located at 1510 Mistletoe Lane and Redbud Lane in Houston's Kingwood area. Inside the structure, he became separated from his crew and was found in cardiac arrest. He was transported to Kingwood Medical Center where he later died. Daniel served five years in the United States Army as a medic. He had been a paramedic for the Houston Fire Department from April 9, 1997 to June 21, 2012. He was widely known for his compassion toward others that reached well beyond the Fire Department. He was survived by his loving wife of thirteen years, Ellie, his children, Cory, Marcus and Thomas. He was also survived by his parents, Gary and Joyce.



Dwight Wayne “Bebe” Bazile

Born: June 14, 1958, in Houston, Texas
Died: February 21, 2015, at age 56
69th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: October 24, 1977, Class 77A
Assignment: Captain-Fire House No. 46 “D” Shift
Buried: Brookside Memorial Park Cemetery, Section 52, Lot HE 8

Captain Bazile, a thirty-seven-year veteran, died after fighting a duplex fire located at 6335 England Street and Cosby Street. He suffered a cardiac arrest and was transported to Memorial Hermann Hospital where two days later he lost his life. Dwight attended Forest Brook High School in Houston, Texas where he graduated in 1976. Afterwards he entered the Houston Fire Academy and graduated in 1978 and this is where his career started with the Houston Fire Department. Dwight was one of the founding members of the Houston Chapter of the Black Fire Fighters Association. He also studied and became a Licensed Vocational Nurse and was a mentor to many who came after him. Captain Bazile was a trail blazer at Fire Station 46 located in the southeast area of the city. Dwight was survived by his wife of thirty-years, Pamela Annette, and one son, Dwight Wayne, II.



Steven Reid Whitfield, II

Born: March 17, 1984, in Beaumont, Texas
Died: March 31, 2016, at age 32
70th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: October 26, 2015
Assignment: Cadet-VJTF, Class 2015G
Buried: Forest Lawn Memorial Park, Beaumont, Texas, Garden of Love, Plot D, Lot 76, Space 2

On the morning of March 31, members of Class 2015G were going through the obstacle course at the “Survival House” at the Val Jahnke Training Facility. Steven had almost competed his turn when he collapsed. His classmates quickly brought him outside and began CPR while attempting to lower his body temperature. Medic 44 was on the grounds involved in a drill. They transported him to Memorial Hermann Hospital. Several hours later efforts to save him failed. His cause of death was ruled dehydration and hyperthermia.Steven was a well-respected cadet, mentor and motivator to many of his classmates and had only two and a half months left of his training. He was thirty-two and older than most of his fellow cadets. His class graduated June 16, 2016 and dedicated the ceremony to him. Class 2015G placed a memorial plaque at the Val Jahnke Training Facility in his honor.
In 2014 he became a member of the Texas National Guard. After completing Infantry and Airborne School, he was in line to attend Army Ranger School. The Army offered him an opportunity to attend the testing process to join the Green Berets, but he declined the offer. Steven was survived by his father, Steven Whitfield Sr. and stepmother Mary Whitfield, and his mom Wanda courts. Also, his four sisters, Lauren, Melissa, Nichole and Anna.



Margaret Merle Roberts

Born: March 21, 1970 in Houston, Texas
Died: January 4, 2017, at age 46
71st HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: August 29, 1994, Class 94B
Assignment: Firefighter-Fire House No. 99 “A” Shift
Buried: Brookside Memorial Park

Margaret was exposed to chemicals during the Market Street Fire in 1995 and was diagnosed later with Multiple Myeloma. She is a Presumptive Illness Line of Duty Death as recognized by the City of Houston and the International Association of Fire Fighters. In 2018 her name was placed on the Colorado Springs IAFF Fallen Firefighter Memorial Wall.



William Ross “Iron Bill” Dowling

Born: March 14, 1973, in Albuquerque, New Mexico
Died: March 7, 2017, at age 43
72nd HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: March 21, 2000, Class 1 2000
Assignment: Captain-Fire House No. 68 “A” Shift
Buried: Wellborn Cemetery, College Station, Texas, Plot DD 54

Bill Dowling was a man of courage and service to others. He graduated in 1993 from Klein Oak High School. Soon after, he joined the United States Marine Corps, only after convincing his recruiter that he would succeed as a member. When he fulfilled his commitment to the Corps, he continued his quest to serve others as a member of the Houston Fire Department. On May 31, 2013 Captain Dowling was seriously injured while leading his crew during the Southwest Inn Fire. The fire started in the Bhojan Indian Restaurant, which was in the front of the motel complex. During the fire, the roof collapsed, trapping him and four crew members. Captain Dowling was the only firefighter rescued from the collapsed building. He was transported to Memorial Hermann Hospital where he was treated for his injuries and fought to stay alive. During his fight for his life, he was given the nickname, “Iron Bill,” for his relentless efforts to heal and return home to his family. “Iron Bill” succumbed to his injuries almost four years later. Bill was survived by his soulmate Jacki, and his three children, Forrest, Faith and Foster.



Kenneth “Kenny” Dale Stavinoha

Born: April 13, 1983, in Houston, Texas
Died: September 21, 2019, at age 36
73rd HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: March 8, 2018, Class 2018A
Assignment: Firefighter-Fire House No. 27 “A” Shift
Buried: Klein Memorial Park, Tomball, Texas, Section L, Lot 325, Space 2

On September 21, 2019 the day Kenny passed away he was wanting to stay busy as usual. He asked if he could cut the grass because it hadn’t been cut before before the “station yard day.” Kenny would be seen throughout the day weed eating and mowing the grass just to stay busy. District Chief 19 would come by often just to talk to the crew; Kenny paused his lawn work to visit with the Chief. After the Chief left and not hearing from Kenny in a while, he would be found by Captain Flores unconscious and unresponsive behind Fire House No. 27. It would later be discovered that he had suffered a massive heart attack, which claimed his life. Kenny’s strength, tall stature and tough shell could have made you feel intimidated, but to all those who truly knew him, he will always be remembered as a kind, gentle giant with a good soul. His unwavering dedication to his job, and his love to help others will always be a cherished memory of him.
Written by Jessica Stavinoha and Joe Flores.



Kevin Anthony Leago

Born: August 14, 1979 in Baytown, Texas
Died: December 12, 2019, at age 40
74th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: January 27, 2001 Class 10
Assignment: Senior Captain-Firehouse No. 29 “C” Shift
Buried: Sterling White Cemetery, Highlands, Texas

Kevin was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and fought a long battle. He is a Presumptive Illness Line of Duty Death as recognized by the City of Houston and the International Association of Fire Fighters. In 2020 his name was placed on the Colorado Springs IAFF Fallen Firefighter Memorial Wall. Kevin Leago became a proud member of the Houston Fire Department January 27, 2001 and served eighteen years with the department. During his rise through the ranks, he served as a paramedic, instructor at the Val Jahnke Training Facility, and as an EMS Supervisor. He was promoted to Senior Captain in 2012. Captain Leago attended the College of the Mainland and received his Paramedic Certification in 1999. He was hired by the Missouri City Fire Department. During this time, he worked for a private ambulance service. In 2001 he became a proud member of the Houston Fire Department. He then graduated from the University of Houston Police Academy and became a deputy for the Galveston County Sherrif’s Office in 2003. In 2010 he graduated from Galveston College with an Associate’s Degree in Nursing and was hired by The University of Texas Medical Branch. Kevin was survived by his wife, Breck and daughter, Kenzi.



Leroy Peña Lucio

Born: June 5, 1958, in San Antonio, Texas
Died: July 20, 2020, at age 62
75th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: December 10, 1990, Fast Track Class
Assignment: Captain-Fire House No. 103 "D" Shift
Buried: Our Lady of Perpetual Help Cemetery, Sampasco, Texas, far left side of the cemetery

Captain Leroy Lucio, a member of the Houston Fire Department for twenty-nine years, lost his life due to the COVID-19 Virus. He had been battling the virus in the ICU of Life Care Hospitals at San Antonio three weeks prior to his death. He is the first Houston Firefighter to die from COVID-19. Leroy's passion of becoming a paramedic was fulfilled when he was hired by fire departments in Kirby and University City to be a frontline paramedic. He was survived by the love of his life, Lala, sons Michael Lucio, Andy Lares, and daughter Elaine Hernandez.



Gerardo Isaias "Jerry" Pacheco

Born: January 4, 1970, in Monterrey, Mexico
Died: August 3, 2020, at age 50
76th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: January 5, 2004, Class 26 2004
Assignment: Firefighter-Fire House No. 101 "C" Shift
Buried: Klein Memorial Park, Tomball, Texas, Section C, Lot 46, Space 2

Jerry Pacheco, a proud member of the Houston Fire Department for seventeen years, lost his life due to the COVID-19 Virus. He had been battling the virus in the ICU at the CHI St. Luke's Health Hospital in the Woodlands. He is the second Houston Firefighter to die from COVID-19. Jerry was a fire fighter/paramedic assigned to Houston Fire Department Station 101 in Kingwood. Jerry is survived by his sons Justin and Jesse. Jerry's family moved to Houston when he was nine years old. After high school, Jerry served proudly in the U.S. Navy, attaining the rank of Petty Officer First Class. He was deployed to Operation Desert Storm in the Gulf War in 1991. After his military service, Jerry worked for the Coca-Cola Company as a truck driver until he entered HFD in January 2004. As the oldest member of Class 26 at the HFD Val Jahnke Training Facility, Jerry shared many stories of his life experiences with younger classmates, making him a popular mentor. Often the life of the party, Jerry enjoyed cruising, basketball with friends and family, and making people laugh. Most of his career was committed to northside fire houses, where he was a popular, well-respected member of his crews. After graduating from high school, he joined the United States Navy. He went up the ranks to Petty Officer, First Class. During his time in the Navy, he was deployed to Operation Desert Storm in the Gulf War in 1991. Jerry was survived by two sons, Justin, who is a member of the Houston Fire Department, and Jesse.



Tommy Wayne Searcy

Born: January 5, 1975, in Houston, Texas
Died: September 8, 2020, at age 45
77th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: August 12, 2002, Class 14 2002
Assignment: Captain-Fire House No. 67 "A" Shift
Buried: Klein Memorial Park, Pinehurst, Texas, Section N, Lot 103, Space 4

Captain Tommy Searcy, an eighteen-year veteran of the Houston Fire Department, lost his life to the COVID-19 Virus. He is the third Houston Firefighter and the eighty-fourth in the United States to pass away from the COVID-19 Virus as a line of duty death in 2020. Tommy and his family received an amazing amount of support from around the world, including help from the HPFFA Local 341 and Texas Lt. Governor Dan Patrick. They were instrumental in getting access to an experimental drug that helped Tommy's body fight the virus while he was in The Woodlands Memorial Hermann Hospital's ICU. He proudly served the community for over twenty-five years with several fire departments in the Houston area including Bellaire, Lufkin, Magnolia, and Westfield, where he became Assistant Chief. Tommy received multiple awards and commendations of valor from both the Westfield Fire Department and the Houston Fire Department. In 2019 his direct actions at a house fire helped save the life of a fellow Houston Firefighter. Captain Searcy was universally respected for his honor, pride, and tradition in the fire service. Tommy was immensely proud of, and survived by, his three daughters Kaylin, Krista, and Kinley. He is also survived by his parents Harold and Sin Chae Searcy, older brother Terry Searcy, and twin brother, HFD District Chief Tony Searcy. Forever Brave, Never Give Up, as in the words of Captain Tommy Searcy…
"Come On, Let's Do This"



"DJ" Bruce

Born: August 23, 1976, in Houston, Texas
Died: October 16, 2020, at age 44
78th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: April 1, 2004, Class 1 2003
Assignment: Investigator-Arson Bureau
Buried: Klein Memorial Park, Magnolia, Texas, Section A, Lot 471, Space 2

Investigator Bruce was conducting surveillance during an arson investigation in the 2100 block of West 18th Street and Seamist around 0330 hours when he got into a confrontation with a suspect and exchanged gunfire. The suspect died at the scene. About an hour later, DJ, shot three times, died from his injuries at Memorial Hermann Hospital. DJ is the Houston Fire Department's first Arson Investigator to die in the line of duty. DJ grew up in north Houston; he was a dedicated Boy Scout and graduated from Klein Oak High School in 1995. After high school DJ enlisted in the United States Marine Corps, where he served honorably for five years. He was one of the youngest Black Hawk helicopter crew chiefs in the history of the Marine Corps. He later served in the Army National Guard. He was survived by Rachel, his wife of fifteen years, and his two young children, Sydney and Grayson.
Many of his friends have said **"Life is Better with Bruce."**



Tanner Graham Reed

Born: October 28, 1981, in Stephenville, Texas
Died: September 3, 2021, at age 39
79th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: December 1, 2003, Class 25
Assignment: Engineer/Operator-Fire House No. 10 "B" Shift
Buried: Glenn Cemetery, Tolar, Texas, Tanner's plot is in the back left corner of the cemetery, under a very large oak tree, next to his Dad, Charles Reed.

Tanner Reed, a proud member of the Houston Fire Department for seventeen years, lost his life to the COVID-19 Virus. Tanner and his family received an incredible amount of unwavering support from the nurses and staff at the HCA Houston Healthcare North Cypress Hospital as well as his colleagues from the Houston Fire Department, and Houston Professional Fire Fighters Association, who continue to be there for his family. Tanner was proud to call himself a Houston Firefighter and was considered one of the best Engineer Operators in his area. His skill and dedication to being the best at his job earned him the respect of all who worked with and his actions on the fire ground helped save many lives and property over the years. Tanner passed on his knowledge, respect for the job, and the right way to do it both on the fire ground and at the fire house. He was a mentor to many, and his teachings made those around him better every day. He served at Fire House No. 73 and Fire House No. 77, with his last assignment as an Engineer/Operator at Fire House No. 10. Lexi Kathleen Reed; Tanner's daughter was everything to him. She has his energy for life and just enough of his orneriness to run the world one day! While Tanner loved the hustle of all the calls and the adrenaline each one brought from the Houston Firefighter life, he missed the space and quietness of the pastures back home in Bluff Dale, Texas and often took Lexi there to ensure she knew the value of country life. He taught her to fish, hunt, and run the fields just as he did as a child. He taught her life lessons that she will carry with her always. Tanner has a very special bond with his dad, Charles and his daughter, Lexi; all three generations were born on the same day, October 28. **Written by Hillary Stephans (Sister) and Firefighter John Randon.**



Jordan Dane Downing

Born: April 6, 1983, in Portles, New Mexico
Died: December 2, 2021, at age 38
80th HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: May 3, 2005-Class 34
Assignment: Firefighter-Fire House No. 44 "B" Shift
Buried: Klein Memorial Park, Tomball, Texas

Jordan was diagnosed with melanoma (skin) cancer, on October 22, 2020. He is a Presumptive Illness Line of Duty Death as recognized by the City of Houston and the International Association of Fire Fighters. In 2023, his name was placed on the Colorado Springs IAFF Fallen Firefighter Memorial Wall. After September 11, 2001, Jordan committed himself to a life of service. He attended several university and academy programs in pursuit of his goal to become a paramedic. He eventually archived this goal, joining the ranks of Houston Fire Department in 2005. Jordan's training and love of everything political led to a coveted spot on the medical detail for the late former President George W. Bush. Jordan was diagnosed with cancer on October 22, 2020. Although there was no cure, he bravely fought the disease, signing up for a clinical trial in hopes he could help ease the struggle for other firefighters fighting cancer now or in the future. Jordan was survived by his wife, Blair; son, Aiden Dane Downing; mother, Donna Jo and his dad, Wayne.



Walter Graves Jr.

Born: March 9, 1968 in Huges, Arkansas
Died: July 6, 2022, at age 54
81st HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: January 7, 2003 Class 17
Assignment: Firefighter-Fire House No. 53 "B" Shift
Buried: Houston National Cemetery,
Section XI, Site 554

Walter was diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma. He is a Presumptive Illness Line of Duty Death as recognized by the City of Houston and the International Assocviation of Fire Fighters. In 2023 his name was placed on the Colorado Springs IAFF Fallen Firefighter Memorial Wall. Before joining HFD in 2003, Walter enlisted in the United States Army, serving for eight years. In the years after his military service, and during his time with HFD Walter also fufilled a life of service to others as a police officer. Walter is survived by his wife, Qawanna, and his children, Gerayl, Darius, Kennedy, and Tremain.



Marcelo "Ox" Garcia, III

Born: June 24, 1982
Died: Died November 6, 2024, at age 42
82nd HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: July 20, 2015 Class 2015E
Assignment: Firefighter-Fire House No. 23 "B" Shift
Buried: Forest Park Lawndale

On Wednesday, November 6, 2024, firefighters were at the scene of a commercial structure fire. At approximately 11:05 p.m. a mayday was transmitted for a wall collapse. Firefighter Garcia and another firefighter were immediately rescued and transported to Memorial Hermann Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries shortly after his arrival. Marcelo attended De Zavala Elementary, Edison Middle School, Milby High School and Texas Southern University, where he majored in Business Administration, demonstrating the same drive, determination, and passion that would later define his career as a firefighter. From an early age, Marcelo excelled in athletics. He played football for the Magnolia Park Sharks and baseball at TSU, finding in sports the values of teamwork, discipline, and service. Over the years, he mentored younger athletes, volunteering with Angels in the Outfield, Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic School, Milby High School's baseball team, and the Magnolia Park Sharks. Marcelo answered the call to serve in 2015. Known for his work ethic, infectious smile, and fierce dedication, he proudly served at Houston Fire Station No. 23, in the heart of the neighborhood where he grew up. For Marcelo, it wasn't just a job; it was a calling. He loved the camaraderie, adrenaline, and the purpose it brought. Marcelo was survived by his father Marcelo Garcia Jr. and stepmother Diana Garcia, mother Rosa Giannukos and stepfather Nalan Giannukos, sister Erica Garcia and her husband Kenneth Bou.



Stephen Doyle Scott

Born: November 16, 1962, in Abeline, Texas
Died: September 17, 2025, at age 62
79TH HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: February 24, 1997, Class 97 A
Assignment: Firefighter/Paramedic Fire House No. 102
Buried: Klein Funeral Home, Cypress, Texas

Born at Dyess Air Force Base in Abilene to Marie Elizabeth and Fred Dewey Scott, Stephen grew up in a close-knit military family with his sister, Arlene. Together they got to experience the world, from Japan and England to Hawaii, California, Missouri, and finally Texas.
Born with hip dysplasia, Stephen spent years in a cast. Despite this start to life, he grew into an accomplished athlete, excelling in football, baseball, and basketball. At Sul Ross State University, he was recognized as a Collegiate All-American for his football prowess. That love of athletics carried into adulthood, when he became known as "Coach Scott," inspiring young athletes with steady guidance and encouragement. Summers in college were spent working on ranches in West Texas, Montana, and beyond. The long days, hard work, and friendships from those years left a lasting mark, and the stories of that time remain family favorites. In 1997, Stephen joined the Houston Fire Department, answering a call to service that would define nearly three decades of his life. He served with distinction at Firehouse No. 9, Firehouse No. 33, and Firehouse No. 102. He also served on the Bike Team and squad car response and valued mentoring young paramedics. More recently, he was honored to be named Manager of Telemetry SETRAC. Alongside his fire service, Stephen was the proud owner of Paramount Property Analysts of Houston, a real estate appraisal company he operated for more than twenty years. He was survived by his wife, Annette, son Caleb Stephen and daughters Madison Nicole, and Savannah.



Brandy Shrade Alliniece

Born: December 30, 1985
Died: December 16, 2025, at age 39
80TH HFD Line of Duty Death
Entered HFD: May 15, 2015 , Class F
Assignment: Fire House No. 21 "B" Shift
Buried:

Brandy Allinience was born and raised in Houston, Texas. She passed away just shy of her 40th birthday after a brave fight with job-related cancer battle she faced with courage, strength, and dignity. For Brandy, firefighting was more than a job; it was her calling. She wanted to serve others and save lives. She was calm in the middle of chaos and found deep fulfillment in knowing her presence alone could change the outcome of someone's worst day. Brandy was educated at Fairchild Elementary School, The Rice School, and Jesse H. Jones High School, where she graduated in 2004. She began her journey of service by enlisting in the United States Air Force, where she served with honor as a Dental Assistant Journeyman, before returning home to serve her community as a firefighter. Those who knew Brandy knew her as someone who loved deeply and lived fully. She cherished quiet moments the focus of a chessboard, the way poetry gives words to feeling and was just as easily the life of the party, laughing loudly and bringing people together. She loved to travel, not just to go somewhere different, but for the memories made, the sense of freedom, and the moments shared along the way. Brandy knew how to live boldly, love without hesitation, and leave an imprint on every soul she encountered. Above all else, Brandy loved her wife, Terica Allinience. Their partnership grounded her, strengthened her, and gave meaning to everything she did. Terica was her safe place, her partner, her best friend, and the love that filled her days. Brandy was deeply involved in the lives of her family,always showing up with love, consistency, and presence. Brandy was survived by her wife Terica; her mother Carrol Coe; and her siblings Thomas Jones, Jeffery Chavis, Traveon.

For more LODD information go to www.houstonfirememorial.org
If you find any errors in text or content contact scottmell@att.net


WILLIAM MARKLEY
BRASWELL
Anne McCormick Sullivan
Born
Dec. 4,
1988
68
LODD
May 31,
2013
Rest Easy Sully
We'll Take It From Here
GEORGE CLARK
APR 14 1895
P. A. TRANEY
MAY 5 1893