

The Fire Mark

WINTER / JANUARY 2025

THE MUSEUM IS TAKING SHAPE

MICHELLE HANEY-KILEEG, CHAIR

Our last newsletter was published just as the Board and volunteers were busy organizing the third Northumberland Antique and Vintage Show. On October 6th, we successfully raised over \$8000 and enjoyed interacting with the 844 visitors and 44 vendors. Thank you for your support. The arena floor lent itself to this type of event, but now that we are moving trucks into the arena, the hunt is on for another venue. Stay tuned for news about the 4th Show this spring.

Over the past several months we have been busy moving various parts of the collection to the Memorial Arena from our many storage locations. We have converted two dressing rooms to storage and completely filled them with smaller artifacts that will eventually form part of our displays, and more items are arriving on a regular basis.

The 2nd floor community room is presently a tidy mess - boxes of periodicals, books and art are waiting - setting up the library and art storage are next. Work crews are at the Arena each Tues, performing a range of tasks. Obviously, those listed above, but also vehicle work, meeting with contractors and a host of other activities as we move toward an opening.

So, when are we opening? Great question. The plans for a new wide and tall door have been postponed, as estimates tripled from earlier expectations. We need an accessible washroom, accessible pedestrian door, possibly a new fire suppression system, and insulation

(Baby, it is cold in there). We are always open to volunteers with skills and/or contacts with local businesses willing to donate time, labour, and materials. I look forward to next newsletter with news of our opening!

Lastly, a shout out to the Cobourg Fire Department who have helped us on several occasions. They are always just a call away.

We have opened an office, phone number (905 372-7718), Wi-Fi and a mailbox (206A Furnace Street).

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

The Museum has benefited from varied contributions by local businesses some of whom were able to donate to CFFM. We are grateful.

HTM Bulgar Gray Insurance Brokers - \$5000

Claire Carrie - \$995

The Full Circle Project - GFL & Paul Griffin - \$3000

We appreciate the members who also made donations in 2024.

The Faulkner Family - \$5000

Dennis Waddington - \$5000

Dickson Wood - \$1000

Michelle Haney-Kileeg - \$1000

How can you donate? If we're at a community event, there will be a QR code available or, visit our website at firemuseumcanada.com/make-a-donation/



DONATIONS IN MEMORY OF OTHERS

We were pleased to receive several donations dedicated to the memory of Kenneth Awender, a former firefighter with the Toronto fire service. He was a great friend, colleague and neighbour to a wide group of people. He died too soon and unexpectedly while travelling in the US. CFFM is grateful to Ken's family for suggesting our museum as a charity for donations in lieu of flowers.

TWO PARADES IN ONE DAY???

CFFM was thrilled to participate in both the Port Hope Santa Claus Parade by day, and the Cobourg Santa Claus Parade by night. We switched it up a tad this year and our 1941 LaFrance was in the ACO Port Hope float, and CFFM followed behind with this gorgeous number.



Port Hope Parade by Day



Cobourg Parade at Night

MP PHILIP LAWRENCE

Seen here with CFFM board members Will Lambert and Michelle Haney-Kileeg and collections committee chair, Christopher Terry. In November, we were thrilled to tour Philip through our new home and share our vision for the CFFM.



RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND GENERAL DUTIES

CFFM is actively recruiting. We are an eclectic group of talented enthusiasts but there are some holes in our bench. Building a roster of dedicated volunteers is essential to keep pace with the successes of 2024. Whether you want to sit on the Board of Directors or contribute a few hours of general duties, your skills and enthusiasm are welcomed.

Please reach out to cfirefightersmuseum@gmail.com

WE ARE STARTING A SERIES ON 'HOW I BECAME A FIREFIGHTER.' THIS IS FROM CFFM DIRECTOR, JOHN DOORELEYERS.

My name is John and in 2021 I retired after 31 years with Toronto Fire Services, the last six as an operations Captain.

This is the story of how that wonderful career came to be .

In 1983 I had graduated from my post secondary Alma Mater with a diploma in Agricultural production management. I was excited to begin a career in agriculture or Agri-business.

Fast forward three years and I had worked with dairy cows, pigs and race horses.

At this point trying to improve my prospects ,I took a job as an artificial insemination technician with a large corporate turkey producer.

This job was as horrific as you might think it is.

Every morning at 04:30 I would report at a turkey barn to individually inseminate 3000 or more turkey hens with a pipette . The job was dirty, arduous, and tedious, but also exacting with a high-performance standard.

My breaking point came when management started talking about my promotion to the Tom (male turkey) barn to learn how to "milk" Toms. Seeing the desperate, skinny looking people that worked in the Tom barn, I became desperate myself.

On impulse I presented myself to a military recruiting office .

I stated that I would take any position that they would give .

I wrote an aptitude test which qualified me for any job which might be available.

I chose firefighter from the list as of course this had immediate appeal.

I was told that firefighters were not recruited from the street but remustered from other trades after proving themselves.

I picked firefighter anyway with two back up choices .

Three weeks later I was in the barn inseminating yet another turkey when I was called to the office to answer the phone.

A voice on the line informed me that the Department of National Defence was offering me a position as a firefighter and could I let them know by the following Wednesday if I would accept the position.

I told the person that I didn't need to wait till next Wednesday please just sign me up.

The staff at the farm must have wondered what happen to me as I never returned to the barn. I immediately went home to wait the three weeks till I reported for military basic training.

My military career is what provided me with the skills and qualifications to eventually become a firefighter with Scarborough and eventually through amalgamation the Toronto fire services. I will forever consider myself truly fortunate to experience the adventure and camaraderie of this amazing career.

Please send us your story to
cfirefightersmuseum@gmail.com



IT IS BACK!!!! CANADIAN FIRE FIGHTERS MUSEUM CHARITY RUN!

LACE UP YOUR SNEAKERS AND GEAR UP FOR AN UNFORGETTABLE EVENT ON JUNE 22, 2025, IN COBOURG, ONTARIO.

Get Ready for the Second Annual Canadian Fire Fighters Museum Charity Run!

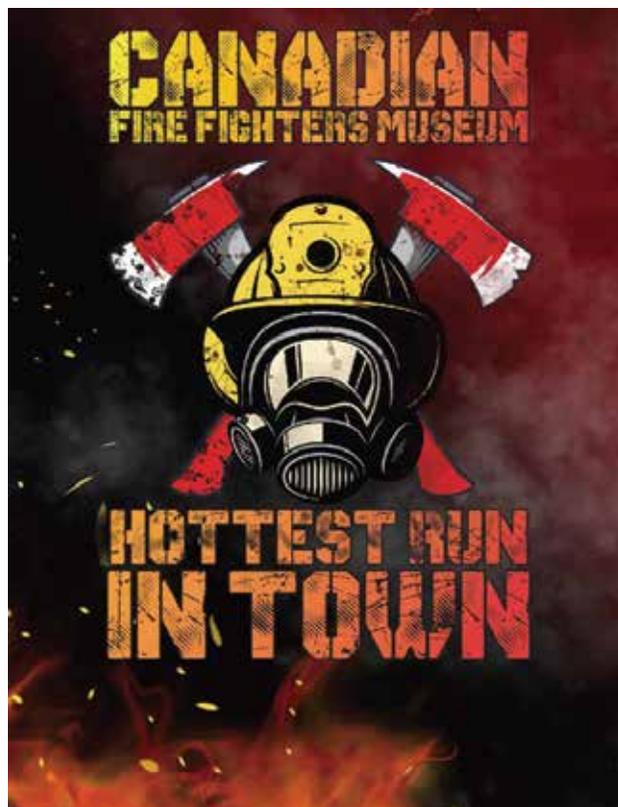
After a blazing success in our inaugural year, we're thrilled to ignite the excitement once again.



Choose your challenge:

-  **5K RUN** – Push your limits and race to the finish line.
-  **2.5K RUN/WALK** – Perfect for families and participants of all ages.
-  **BUNKER GEAR CHALLENGE** – Step into a firefighter's boots (bring your own bunker gear).

This isn't just a run; it's a celebration of courage and a tribute to the bravery of Canadian firefighters. Every step and every donation supports the Canadian Fire Fighters Museum, helping to preserve the rich history and honour the heroic legacy of these extraordinary individuals.



Join us as we blaze a trail through Cobourg for a cause that matters.

Cool shirts, cool medals, and one hot event await!

Don't miss out – rally your friends, register today, and let's make history together!

See you at the starting line!

Register at: CanadianFireFightersMuseumRun.org

SHOUT OUT TO CHADWICKS TOWING AND HOW THEY HELPED US ORGANIZE

THE BIG APPARATUS

WILL LAMBERT, CURATOR

One of the most difficult things to move are the apparatus (trucks, wagons etc.) that make up our fleet. We had planned to install a new and larger truck door at the arena to facilitate such moves, but those plans have now been delayed. Still the work goes on and to date we have placed seven trucks in the arena.

Our **1941 GMC "pumper"** (former Napanee) was the first to arrive and is now safely stored in the heated garage area. We had some mechanical work done on this unit prior to its use in both the Port Hope and Cobourg Santa Claus parades and it is now running much better. In this heated space we can continue working on it ourselves, as some further TLC is still required. (Figure 1)



Figure 1

The **1914 American LaFrance "chemical/hose combination"** (former Stratford) was next to be moved and now rests on the arena floor. *Editor note: See the full article on the 1914 on Page 7.* Being one of our smaller vehicles, this was not too difficult to move, even though the Zamboni tunnel entry to the arena is quite tight and much less than ideal. (Figure 2)



Figure 2

This was followed by our **1921 American LaFrance "pumper/chemical combination"** (former Toronto) which has both an onboard water pump and a pressure cylinder that delivers the extinguishing agent when acid is mixed with its soda water contents. a similar size to our 1914, it was also installed in the arena without too much difficulty. (Figure 3)



Figure 3

Next was the **1926 Gotfredson "pumper"** (former Midland, ON). A larger and heavier vehicle that relied solely on its water pump and has no chemical tank,
Continued on next page.

APARATUS CONT.

as these were falling out of favour by this time. Getting it inside the arena was slightly more challenging, but the job was accomplished with more care and without incident. (Figure 4)



Figure 4

This was followed by the move of our **1941 International "city service ladder truck"** (former Kenora). This is a jack of all trades type vehicle popular with smaller communities that could not afford specialty trucks, like aerial ladder units. The city service trucks had an onboard water pump, carried a good supply of hose and also carried a full array of ground ladders, including larger "bangor" style ones that required at least 4 men to raise and position. This is a longer vehicle and required considerable effort and technique to get safely inside the arena. (Figure 5)



Figure 5

Our **1950 American LaFrance 700 series "pumper"** (former Toronto) was the next unit moved. These trucks were very popular with Firefighters and

represented a significant leap forward in firefighting technology with their cab-over-engine design. This shortened the overall length of the vehicle and provided the driver with a much better view of the road and a reduced turning radius. These sleek-looking, small and nimble pumpers met with widespread approval from those who rode them. This vehicle presented few problems getting into the arena, thanks to its compact design. (Figure 6)



Figure 6

Buoyed by our successes we then decided to try moving a larger vehicle. Our 1945 LaFrance JOX "aerial" truck with an 85' steel ladder. As one of the inner dual tires had failed while in storage, we first had to have a mobile tire service specialist come out and remount the tire, before we could even begin the move. The JOX employs the same cab-over-engine design as the 700 series pumper, but being an aerial ladder it is still a big, long and heavy vehicle (42 feet in length). This presented a severe problem as there are only 43 feet between the arena and the adjacent curling club, so no room to turn the truck 90 degrees to line up with the tunnel entrance. With the help of a large tow truck and a second rotator crane towing unit Chadwicks were able to help us winch the truck into alignment and then get it into the building. It was an impressive and time-consuming effort which at one point wound up with the front of the aerial truck jammed against the wall of the arena. Fortunately, no damage to truck or building resulted, but it was a bit scary and some valuable lessons were learned. (Figure 7)

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APARATUS CONT.



With six trucks on the floor and one in the garage, we have to take a pause in our fleet delivery. The remaining aerial truck that we can access right now is 46 feet long and will not make the turn to line up with the tunnel, even with the help of multiple tow units. We are investigating the possibility of manually raising the ladder slightly, to shorten the truck and make this maneuver possible. This will

require some study on our part and a great deal of caution if we decide to try it, as raising the ladder also raises the center of gravity and makes the vehicle more unstable. The rest of our fleet is currently tucked away in a barn and blocked in by lots of agricultural equipment. We won't have access to these vehicles until late spring 2025. We believe that all but one of those, due to its size, will be possible to get inside the arena.

In spite of our successes to date, getting more trucks inside than we thought possible, this leaves us with an interesting problem. We will have at least one, likely two, vehicles which will not physically fit into our new home via the Zamboni ramp. That brings us right back to the need for a new truck entry door and finding the funds for that project. Stay tuned for future updates and please feel free to make a donation to the CFFM to help us reopen asap and resume sharing our collection and knowledge with the public.

THE TIMES THEY WERE A' CHANGING!

DENNIS WADDINGTON, DIRECTOR

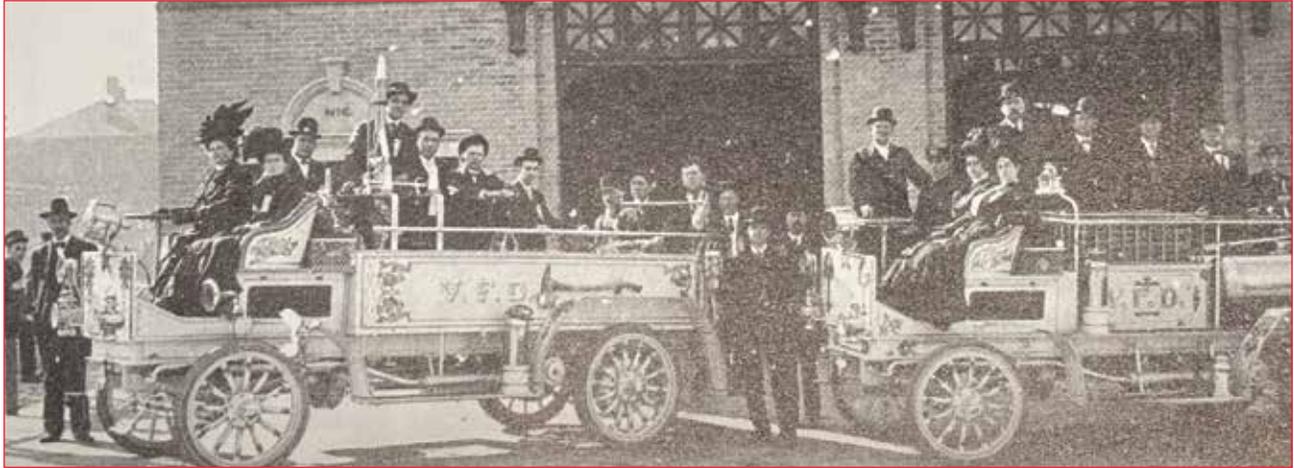
The early twentieth century was a time of rapidly evolving technology spurred on by the development of practical internal combustion engines. Fire fighting apparatus was no exception. The steam powered, horse drawn pumpers of 19th century urban fire departments were as heavy and awkward as they were flashy and dramatic. They required a whole support ecosystem of horses, stables, feed and solid road surfaces. The first development away from horses was to self-propelled steam pumpers but again that was heavy, awkward and expensive. The gasoline powered engines on rubber tires were more maneuverable and lighter weight. Gasoline-powered pumper trucks are so common now that we need to be reminded that they didn't arise out of thin

air. Originally they were a hard sell to departments with heavy financial commitments to steam apparatus plus tradition formed people's opinions on the reliability of the steam as a trusted and superior technology.

The earliest gas-powered "firetrucks" in Canada were Seagrave's buckboard style with their air-cooled engines mounted under the driver's seat, with nothing ahead except the dashboard, not even horses. The first motorized units in Canada were three 1907 Seagrave "buckboard" 40 hp hose wagons acquired by Vancouver. Vancouver was a leader in early adoption of motorized apparatus and acquired several more buckboard units in following

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THE TIMES THEY WERE A'CHANGING! CONT.



years. This photo from Donal Baird's book "A Canadian History of Fire Engines" shows a hose wagon and a chemical engine in Vancouver.

CFFM's oldest motorized fire engine is the 1914, American LaFrance Type 12 combination chemical and hose car, originally from Stratford, Ontario. It is number 708 and its factory documentation is also part of the CFFM holdings. Its shipping date from the factory was October 8, 1914.

It was built at American LaFrance's Elmira, New York factory. The picture below shows the truck delivery to Stratford on October 9, 1914. Chief A. S. Kappeler is in the driver seat. Featuring the proud buyers and sellers, the photo was taken front of Stratford city hall during the Fire Chiefs Convention which was in Stratford that year. The Convention booklet included this ad and picture.



This truck has a gasoline, water-cooled, inline 6-cylinder engine designed by American LaFrance and rated at 104 hp. Power is delivered to the rear drive wheels through drive chains rather than drive shafts as in modern trucks. The original solid rubber tires were later replaced with pneumatic tires, a common practice of the times as tire design improved for better handling.

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THE TIMES THEY WERE A'CHANGING! CONT.



As configured for service in Stratford, this truck represented a significant advance in design and technology going into the era of the internal combustion engine, yet it was still transitional out of the age of steam. It was equipped with two 35 gallon Champion-Babcock soda-acid chemical tanks used in initial attack to contain fires before they could spread, but it was purchased along with a new Waterous steam pumper. So this truck combined the function of the horses by towing the steam pumper, and replaced the hose reels and hose wagons by carrying hose for the pumper that it towed. An all-in-one unit that honoured the past and the future at the same time. The vintage photo above shows it is fully equipped with its steam pumper, traction chains on the dual drive wheels, hoses, ladders, chemical tanks, numerous hand extinguishers, and even a crowd of kids watching.



The truck is reported to have been in active service until the late 1920s, then held in reserve and eventually for parade duty. In 1959 the city considered selling it and in the late 1960s it was sold to a private collector who did restoration work on it in 1971. It is reported to have been in operating condition until 1997. It was sold to the National Museum of Science and Technology (now "Ingenium") in 1998. During its service life, and following disposal by Stratford, modifications and restoration work were carried out, largely authentic but potentially the subject of another discussion. It is considered on the whole to be in excellent condition for its age and was donated to CFFM by Ingenium in 2022. It is now a prominent and welcome piece of the CFFM's collection.

Acknowledgements: Sources of information for this article include

- American LaFrance factory records in the Donal Baird collection held by CFFM
- Condition reports and other files from Ingenium
- Donal Baird (2001): A Canadian History of Fire Engines, Vanwell Publishing Limited, St Catherines, Ontario; ISBN 1-55125-054-3
- Rick Micks, retired member of the Stratford Fire Department and department "historian"
- Stratford - Perth Archives

