The contract has been signed with Pierce Fire Apparatus for a new Ladder 1. Ladder 1 will be a 105’ rear mount aerial apparatus, similar to Ladders 3 and 4. To comply with latest NFPA standards, Ladder 1 will have a partially raised cab roof. Delivery is expected in the spring. After delivery, Ladder 1’s current apparatus (the 1992 Pierce/Smeal 105’ rear mount) will be designated as spare Ladder 5.

Money has been allocated by the City capital fund for interior renovations (including bathrooms and lavatories) to the fire house buildings at Lafayette Square and at Headquarters.
**Who’s New**

FFOPs John Pasquarello and Matthew McDonald graduated from the 12 week recruit firefighter training program at the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy on 26 September 2008. They were both certified to national standards as Firefighter I/II.

- Photo by Bruce Gauvin

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**All Companies Working**

Box 4-853, 9 December 2008, the Lexington Avenue fourth alarm is pictured below.
Photos below show Cambridge companies working with Somerville Fire Companies at Box 2-1271, Second Alarm for 23 and 25 Cross Street, Somerville. The fire occurred on 7 October 2008 at 0108 hours. Engine 5, Squad 2, and Division 1 worked at the fire. Engine 4 and Ladder 1 covered.

Flaking out 2 1/2" line prior to stretching in a hand line.

FF Mark Massiah (Engine 5) overhauls fire area on the roof.
**FF Mark Massiah** (Engine 5) and **FF Fran Gallagher** (Division 1) work on the roof.

Overhauling on the roof sector

**FF Fran Gallagher** (Tactical Aide to Division 1)

Cambridge **DFC Steve Leonard** (Division 1) and Somerville **District Chief Patrick Sullivan III** (C-3) planning strategy.
F.Lt. Steve Boyle, Jr. (Squad 2)

F.Lt. Jim Desrosiers (Engine 5)

FF Andrew Mello (Sq 2), F.Lt. Steve Boyle (Sq 2), FF Ramon Perez (Engine 5), and DFC Steve Leonard (Division 1)

- photos above by Jimmy Swanton
FFs Daniel Caceres, Ted Whitney, and Ameer Moustaffa (Engine 5) and DFC Michael Morrissey and Tactical Aide FF Dan Maloney (Division 1) operating at the Third Alarm on 4 November 2008 for 79-81 Walnut Street in Somerville.

- photo above by Jimmy Swanton

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**Faces of the Fire Service**

Pictures below were taken at Somerville Second Alarm box 2-242, 37 Lewis Street, Somerville on 14 November 2008.

Fire showing: **DFC Dave Salvi** (Somerville C-2), **F.Lt. Miguel Torres** (Engine 5), and **FF John Hathaway** (Engine 5)
F.Lt. Rich Turcotte (Engine 4) and DFC Frank Murphy (Division 2)

Engine 5 stretches an attack line into the fire building.

FF Jack Shinkwin (Tactical Aide to Division 2)
FF Andy Carrigan (Engine 5)

FF Michael Travers, Jr. (Engine 2 detailed to Squad 2) and FF Jay Martell (Squad 2)

F.Lt. Miguel Torres (Engine 5)
More Faces of the Fire Service

All companies working at Box 543 for the hi-rise building, fire in the trash chute, 221 Mount Auburn Street on 8 Nov 2008. Group 4 was on duty.

FF Paul Marinelli (Engine 8) and FF Alan Johnson (Truck 4)
FF Nathan Jarvi and F.Lt. Charles Lowe (Engine 1)

DFC Frank Murphy (Division 2), FF Bryan O’Neil (Engine 4 detailed to Squad 4), and F.Lt. Michael Travers (Squad 4)
F.Lt. John Kotowski and FF William ‘Bumper’ Sullivan (Truck 1)

DFC Frank Murphy (Division 2)

F.Lt. David McKinley (Engine 9)
Four alarms from Box 4-853, Lexington Avenue, 9 Dec 2008

Out and About

Lexington

Cambridge Ladder 1 and Division 1 operated at the Four Alarm condo fire in Lexington in a converted school building. Engine 4 covered.
Cambridge Ladder 1 (left side) operating the ladder pipe alongside Bedford Ladder 1 at the fire in the condo building which had been converted from a former school building. Group 4 was on duty. Lexington Fire transmitted four alarms for this fire.

- Photo above by Dan O’Neill

Waltham

The Cambridge Fire Department Dive Rescue Unit, working with Waltham Fire Department over several days of diving in October, located and assisted in removing a derelict truck from the bottom of the Hobbs Brook Reservoir in Waltham. Hobbs Brook is part of the drinking water supply system for the City of Cambridge. The truck had been leaking oil and fluids into the water system.
These CFD divers assisted in the truck location, recovery, and removal.

- photos above by F.Lt. Steve Landry (Engine 8)
SRT Training

F.Lt. Steve Landry

- photos above by FF Robert Marshall (Waltham C200)
Cambridge Fire Tactical Paramedics working with Cambridge Police SRT recently participated in a full scale Special Response Team exercise. Fire Captain Gregory Carter, working with PD command staff, coordinated the fire response in this training exercise.

FF Medics **Scott Volz** and **Sean Williams** provide medical care to a “victim.”

Police Lieutenant Stephen Ahern


- photos above by **F.Lt. Jeremy Walsh**

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**Emmitsburg, Maryland and Gettysburg, Pennsylvania**

Thanks to **FF Howie Smith** (Ladder1) for sharing these photos of the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg and of the Fire Zouaves memorial at Gettysburg.
Fallen Firefighter Memorial with eternal flame

Night view with eternal flame
New York 73rd, First Zouaves Memorial – Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

Fire Zouaves Memorial – Firefighter and Soldier
On 22 September 2008, the Cambridge Fire Department and Cambridge Firefighters Local 30 was well represented at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Moving Wall ceremony in Wilmington. The Cambridge Fire Department remembers, respects, and honors our Vietnam Veterans. We remember the sacrifices of those who did not return.
F.Lt. Brad Tenney (keynote speaker), Mrs. Louise Faga (Lt. Tenney’s mother-in-law), F.Lt. Galvin Murphy, and FF Jim Bergin

FF Bergin’s brother, Gerard F. Bergin, USMC, was killed in action while fighting for his country in the Vietnam War. Brad Tenney is a USMC veteran of the Vietnam War. Galvin Murphy is also a USMC veteran.

- photos above by Owen Carrigan
Congratulations

It’s a ............girl! Congrats to Sean White (Engine 8, group 2) and wife Kari, on the birth of Diane Kay. Diane Kay was born at 1902 hours on 14 Oct 2008. She weighed in at 9 lbs 1 oz and was 22 inches long. Mommy and Diane Kay are doing great. Diane’s sisters, Audrey and Harleigh are very excited about the newest sister in the family.

Diane Kay White

Congratulations also to FF Condorcet Roberts (Truck 2, group 2) and Annmarie Roberts on the birth of Jillian Lacey Elizabeth Roberts. Jillian was born on 14 August at 1036 hours. She weighed in at 6 pounds 10 ounces and was 19 inches long. Jillian joins brother, Cameron Matthew Kevin (age 8) as the newest member of the Roberts family.
Commendation

Congratulations on a job well done by FF Marinelli.

GENERAL ORDER NO. 23, SERIES OF 2008

TO THE COMMANDING OFFICER

RE: Commendation of Firefighter Paul Marinelli
For Actions at Still Alarm Incident #8003971, on the bike path IVO Alewife MBTA Station on Wednesday, 8 October 2008

Upon the recommendation of Lieutenant Steven J. DeMarco – Cambridge Police Department, Firefighter Paul F Marinelli is commended.

The following narrative was written by Lieutenant Steven J. DeMarco, Cambridge Police Department, Investigations Section:

On 10/08/2008 at approximately 07:50 hours, Cambridge Police Officers, Cambridge Firefighters, and Pro Ambulance personnel responded to the bike path near Alewife T station for a report of a man down. An off-duty Cambridge firefighter named Paul Marinelli (assigned to Engine 8 on Garden Street) was on his way home after working a shift when he observed an individual lying on the ground near the bike path. Firefighter Marinelli decided to stop and investigate. He immediately observed that the person on the ground was in dire need of medical assistance. Firefighter Marinelli called for assistance while providing medical care to the person who was later identified as MICHAEL GAINUS (homeless).

Mr. GAINUS sustained a life-threatening wound and was rushed to a medical facility where he later underwent emergency surgery. We are still investigating this incident to determine if this incident was a criminal act or an accident. An on scene preliminary investigation that morning by responding detectives revealed that Mr. GAINUS had been lying on the ground for approximately twelve (12) hours!! It is estimated that hundreds of people passed by Mr. GAINUS while he was lying on the ground and no one (EXCEPT FOR FIREFIGHTER MARINELLI) checked on him or called for assistance. Also, if you remember the temperature that evening (overnight) fell to the mid to low 40’s.

It is my opinion (and I say this extremely confidently) that I report to you that Firefighter Marinelli saved Mr. GAINUS’s life that morning by the actions he took. Also the other Firefighters and EMTs from Pro Ambulance that responded and provided medical treatment did as well. I believe this dedication to duty by Firefighter Paul Marinelli should not go unnoticed and be officially recognized and noted as part of his official record. As such, with your permission I am going to be forwarding this Letter of Commendation to Firefighter Paul Marinelli’s superiors.

The decisive action of Firefighter Paul F. Marinelli is in the highest tradition of the Cambridge Fire Department. Firefighter Paul F. Marinelli is hereby commended for this life-saving action.

Per Order,

Gerald R. Reardon
Chief of Department

Promotions

Per GO No. 25, effective Friday, 31 October 2008 at 0700 hours, the following members are promoted:

Acting Fire Lieutenant Michael A. Donovan promoted to Fire Lieutenant
Acting Fire Lieutenant Michael J. Francis promoted to Fire Lieutenant

Per GO No. 26, effective Friday, 31 October 2008 at 1600 hours, the following member is promoted:
Fire Lieutenant Jason A. Grimm promoted to Fire Captain

Transfers

Per GO No. 27, effective Sunday, 2 November 2008 at 0700 hours:

**Fire Captain Jason A. Grimm** from Engine Company No. 1 to Engine Company No. 3
**Fire Lieutenant Michael Francis** from Engine Company No. 3 to Engine Company No. 1
**Fire Captain Joseph L. Dynan Jr.** from Engine Company No. 3 to Headquarters

Per GO No. 28, effective Sunday, 16 November 2008 at 0700 hours:

**Fire Lieutenant Michael A. Donovan** from Squad No. 4 to Engine Company No. 3
**Firefighter Bryan B. O’Neil** from Engine Company No. 4 to Squad No. 2
**Firefighter John W. Bell** from Squad No. 2 to Rescue Company No. 1
**Firefighter Darron R. Smith** from Engine Company No. 8 to Engine Company No. 1
**Firefighter Lawrence M. Pacios** from Engine Company No. 1 to Ladder Company No. 4
**Firefighter Robert A. Golden** from Ladder Company No. 4 to Engine Company No. 4
**Firefighter John J. Kenney** from Engine Company No. 4 to Fire Headquarters
**Firefighter Donald H. Johnson** from Engine Company No. 4 to Engine Company No. 8
**Firefighter Timothy C. Latson**, Jr. from Fire Headquarters to Engine Company No. 4

Per GO No. 33, effective Sunday, 4 January 2009 at 0700 hours:

**Firefighter David McCaffrey** from Ladder Company No. 1 to Division No. 1

Retirements

Per GO No. 30, effective Friday, 26 December 2008 at 1700 hours Fire Lieutenant William C. Hugh retired from the Cambridge Fire Department. Fire Lieutenant William C. Hugh was appointed on 5 March 1972. His other assignments were as follows:

- March 5, 1972 Engine Company No. 7
- March 4, 1973 Rescue Company No. 1
- December 2, 1979 Engine Company No. 8
- November 16, 1980 Engine Company No. 5
- January 10, 1982 Acting Lieutenant, Engine Company No. 5
- May 9, 1982 Promoted to Lieutenant, Engine Company No. 8
- January 2, 1983 Ladder Company No. 2
- January 1, 1995 Emergency Management
- September 15, 1996 Ladder Company No. 2
- July 13, 2008 Headquarters

Per GO No. 31, effective Sunday, 4 January 2009 at 0700 hours Firefighter Walter J. Grace retired from the Cambridge Fire Department. Firefighter Walter J. Grace was appointed on March 5, 1972. His other assignments were as follows:

- March 5, 1972 Engine Company No. 1
- March 4, 1973 Aerial Tower No. 1
Per GO No. 32, effective Friday, 2 January 2009 at 0700 hours Firefighter Frederick Sage retired from the Cambridge Fire Department. Firefighter Frederick Sage was appointed on 4 March 1973. His other assignments were as follows:

- March 4, 1973  Engine Company No. 6
- July 22, 1973  Ladder Company No. 3
- March 13, 1977  Aerial Tower No. 1
- April 27, 1980  Engine Company No. 3
- January 2, 1983  Ladder Company No. 2
- March 31, 1991  Aide to Chief of Department

Through the Lantern Lens

By Mose Humphrey

It is early October as I write this column and the Christmas decorations are in stores already. The holiday season is fast approaching and shortly after Thanksgiving a giant Christmas tree will arrive in Boston to be placed on the Boston Common just like it has every holiday season since 1971. Not many people know that this tree is an expression of gratitude from our neighbors in the north from Halifax, Nova Scotia.

On December 6, 1917, two freight ships (the Mont Blanc and the Imo) pulled into Halifax harbor. The Mont Blanc was carrying a dangerous cargo of picric acid, Benzol and TNT. At approximately 8:30am the two ships collided while entering the port and a fire broke out on the Mont Blanc. With the dangerous cargo on fire, the crew quickly abandoned ship. The Imo tried to exit the harbor, but the Mont Blanc drifting towards shore blew up. The explosion was so powerful it sent a tidal wave inland drowning many. The people that survived the initial tidal wave were showered with debris from a second shockwave. Chain links from the anchor chain were found over a mile inland which had struck a military hospital killing most of the patients. Shrapnel from the boat was found more than two miles inland and the blast was so powerful an officer of the ship woke up nude a half mile ashore. Many buildings were demolished, building debris littered the area and overturned stoves and gas leaks turned the debris into large fires. The destruction was beyond belief.

A plea for help was sent throughout Canada and the United States. The only fire department from the United States to respond was none other than the Boston Fire Department. They loaded available firefighting equipment, medical supplies and personnel on trains and responded to the scene. After the damage was surveyed, a total of 1600 people were killed, 8000 injured and 20,000 left homeless. As a show of appreciation to the Boston Fire Department, the City of Halifax starting sending a giant Christmas tree in 1971 and every holiday after that. It is so important to the people of Nova Scotia that “people have cried over it, argued about it, even penned song lyrics in its honor and Nova Scotian children study the explosion in school and they know Boston was one of the first responders, and really a lifesaver.
From the Archives

Cambridge Fire Lieutenant George H. Friel is believed to be the only non FDNY member to be awarded a medal at FDNY Medal Day. Lt. Friel, who became the Captain of Cambridge Rescue Company #1, was assigned to work and train with FDNY Rescue 1 in order to bring the heavy and special rescue skills back to Cambridge as Rescue Company 1 was established on 25 March 1932. Among the numerous incidents and drills, Lt. Friel worked with FDNY Rescue 1 at Manhattan Box 5-549, a fifth alarm for a pier and warehouse fire at 8 Gansevoort Street, near 11th Avenue and West 13th Street.

8 Gansevoort Street, Manhattan Box 5-549

On May 6, 1932, the recently commissioned fireboat the John J. Harvey, along with six other FDNY fireboats, responded to its first major fire, an early morning job at the Cunard Pier, at Thirteenth Street and Eleventh Avenue. Four hundred of the 700 firefighters at the scene were treated for injuries and smoke inhalation as yellow smoke from the stubborn fifth-alarm blaze covered the downtown area and drifted over to Jersey City. One civilian, the engineer who had designed the steel work on the “fireproof” structure, was killed when struck by the butt of a breakaway hose. For their bravery in saving a trapped FDNY officer at the Pier 54 fire, Capt. Cornell M. Garety of Rescue 1 received the James Gordon Bennett Medal, and firefighter George E. Cavanagh was awarded the Walter Scott Medal. Lt. George H. Friel of the Cambridge, Massachusetts Fire Department, and a student at FDNY’s Fire College, was also cited for his participation in the rescue.

13 FIRE HEROES WIN AWARDS OF MERIT

Capt. C.M. Garety of Flushing to get Bennett Medal for Rescue of Fellow Officer
STUDENT ALSO HONORED

Receives Insignia and Citation –
O’Brien to Make Awards at City Hall Next Month

Winners of the medals given annually for heroism to members of the New York Fire Department were announced yesterday by Fire Commissioner John J. Dorman, who said Mayor O’Brien would make the awards at City Hall some time next month.

The departmental Board of Merit made the selections. It selected Captain Cornell M. Garety of Flushing as the recipient of the James Gordon Bennett Medal for the most outstanding deed of valor during 1932. Captain Garety rescued a fellow captain, William J. Heffernan, under dangerous circumstances in a warehouse fire. Fireman George E. Cavanagh of Astoria, who assisted in the rescue, will receive the Walter Scott Medal.

Captain Heffernan was inside the burning warehouse when one of his men collapsed from the smoke. Fireman Cavanagh came to aid the helpless fireman, but was forced to abandon him because of the heat and smoke. Captain Garety reached Captain Heffernan and the unconscious fireman and aided them to the first floor stairway. After the unconscious fireman had been removed from the building, Captain Garety carried Captain Heffernan out. It was necessary to lift Captain Heffernan out of his boots to free him from the tangle of hose lines in which his feet had been caught.

Lieutenant George H. Friel of the Cambridge, Mass. Fire Department also aided in the rescue. He was a student in the Fire College at the time and responded to the alarm. He has received a citation and an award of a bronze sleeve insignia by the New York Fire Department. Other medal winners and their deeds follow:

Captain Frederick Wedemeyer – Henry D. Brookman Medal for rescuing Michael Moriarty in a tenement fire at 786 Columbus Avenue.

James Smithwick – John J. Prentice Medal for rescuing Miss Nellie Grantfield at the same fire.

Stephen McArdle – Hugh Bonner Medal for rescuing Martin McNulty under hazardous circumstances at the same fire.

Maurice Hartnett – Trevor-Warren Medal for rescuing two girls at 53 East 104th Street after they had become unconscious from smoke.

Lieutenant Henry Feuerbach – Brooklyn Citizens Medal for rescuing two unconscious boys at 296 Howard Avenue, Brooklyn.

Captain Albert B. Carlson – The Dr. Archer Medal for maintaining the most efficient fire company during the year. He commands Engine 48 at Webster Avenue and Fordham Road, the Bronx.

For the third time in his career, Assistant Chief Thomas F. Dougherty receives the Administration Medal for two inventions he perfected last year to aid in fighting fires. He invented a special nozzle for use under piers and bulkheads, and a large distributing nozzle with seven outlets for cellars and ship holds.

Fireman Charles Rosenson will receive the Crimmins Medal and Fireman Francis E. Powers the Kenny Memorial Medal for their aid in breaking up an arson ring that planned a fire in a Rockaway Beach hotel last June. There were twenty-nine sleeping adults and three children in the hotel when Rosenson crashed into one of the rooms and subdued one of the firebugs. Alcohol, benzene, and time fuses had been laid.

Powers caught another incendiary as he was getting away in a automobile. After a fight on the street Powers arrested him. Both firemen were working under Chief Fire Marshal Thomas P. Brophy. Seven men and a woman were arrested in the arson plot. Four are in prison, one awaits trial, another died recently, and two have been acquitted.

- from The New York Times, originally published May 5, 1933
Headquarters
Fire Department
City of New York

Special Order
No. 100

New York, June 14, 1933

I. The Board of Merit having recommended the award of Department and Citizens' Medals for valor for the year 1932, also awards made on Service Records for the year 1932, and the recommendations having been approved by the Fire Commissioner, the following awards are made.

Medals will be presented by His Honor, the Mayor, John P. O'Brien, at City Hall, on Wednesday, June 14, 1933, at 12 Noon.

Roll of Merit, 1932
Class I, With Department Medal

Captain Cornell M. Carey, Rescue Company No. 1, for a heroic act, at extreme personal risk, in the rescue of Captain William J. Heffernan, Engine Company No. 5, from premises No. 8 Garson Street, Manhattan, signal station 549 at 10:35 P. M., May 26, 1932.

Also awarded the Bennett Medal.

Fireman 1st grade Stephen J. McCullough, Engine Company No. 24, for heroic work, at extreme personal risk, in the rescue of Mr. Martin McNulty, from premises No. 786 Columbus Avenue, Manhattan, signal station 1232, at 1:20 A. M., February 15, 1932.

Also awarded the Bennett Medal.

Fireman 1st grade Anthony M. Hare, Hook and Ladder Company No. 26, for heroic work, at extreme personal risk, in rescuing Dorothy Taylor and Essie Taylor, from premises No. 33 East 104th Street, Manhattan, signal station 1290, at 4:38 A. M., September 3, 1932.

Also awarded the Trevor-Warren Medal.

Fireman 1st grade Francis E. Peck, Engine Company No. 33, for heroic work, at extreme personal risk, in connection with the apprehension of certain parties who had conspired to burn the Plaza Hotel, 145 Beach 89th Street, Rockaway Beach, Borough of Queens, at 2 P. M., June 18, 1932.

Also awarded the Kenny Medal.

Fireman 1st grade Charles Rauh, of Engine Company 33, for heroic work, at extreme personal risk, in connection with the apprehension of certain parties who had conspired to burn the Plaza Hotel, 145 Beach 89th Street, Rockaway Beach, Borough of Queens, at 2 P. M., June 18, 1932.

Also awarded the Krummels Medal.
CLASS II

DATE OF ACT        DATE OF AWARD

Aug. 13. Henry C. Peurbach, H. 121, now Captain H. 110 April 28, 1933
(also Brooklyn Citizens’ Medal)

Firemen 1st grade

Mar. 22. Edward J. Crisby, H. 24 April 17, 1933
June 16. Charles F. Polson, Jr., H. 24
June 16. Edward J. Fox (2), H. 24
Aug. 1. Michael Mihos, H. 16 April 28, 1933
** 3. Ernest Mattes, H. 16
** 1. William Horetn, E. 39
** 1. Matthew McGee, E. 39
** 1. Peter McGovern, E. 39
** 1. George Lorsa, E. 8
** 1. Daniel M. Lynx, E. 8
** 1. William J. Kirkham, E. 65

Chief of Battalion

** 1. John J. Ryan (2), 8th Battalion

Firemen 1st grade

** 1. Peter P. A. Hick, H. 4
Sept. 4. John Ryan, H. 26 April 17, 1933
** 4. James F. Supple, E. 23

CLASS III

DATE OF ACT        DATE OF AWARD

April 14. Denis B. Shea, E. 66, now E. 77 April 17, 1933

Firemen 1st grade

May 4. James J. Fitzsimmons, E. 34
** 26. Charles C. Roggenkamp, Rescue 1, now H. 24
** 26. James E. Walsh (1), Rescue 1
** 26. Domenico A. DiBenedetto, Rescue 1

Lieutenant

** 26. George H. Friel, Cambridge, Mass. Fire Department, assigned to Rescue Co. 1

Firemen 1st grade

Aug. 1. William Ngyruy, H. 16 April 28, 1933
** 1. Harry W. Held, H. 15
** 1. Alfred H. Scherff, H. 15
** 1. Thomas J. Sheridan, H. 16

Lieutenant

** 1. Philip Fitzpatrick (2), E. 23

Firemen 1st grade

** 1. Max Kolmisteich, E. 23
** 1. Frank Kass, Jr., E. 23
** 1. John H. Wilson, E. 23
** 1. William Hamilton, E. 23

Firemen 4th grade

** 1. Anthony J. Fitzsimmons, E. 23

(3)
Editor’s note: Captain George Friel’s sons, William and Edmund (Buddy), also were members of the Cambridge Fire Department. His grandson’s, Fire Captain Lawrence Brogan (Engine 4, group 1), Fire Captain Steven Brogan (Fire Prevention), Firefighter John Brogan (Engine 9, group 1), and Firefighter Edmund Friel (Engine 4, group 1) are current members of the department. Nephews, John B. Toomey (Engine 3) and John B. Toomey, Jr. (Engine 9) are retired.

Thanks to FF Howie Smith (Ladder 1, group 1) for completing the research on the above narrative.

Box 2 - 79 - May 1, 1949: Two alarms were ordered by Chief Kilfoyle for the fire in the flat-iron block bounded by Massachusetts Avenue, Cedar Street, and Harvey Street. The narrative below, from the collection of FF Kevin Lawson (Truck 3), appeared in Fire Engineering magazine. The block still stands today and has been the site of more than one serious fire over the years.
CAMBRIDGE FIREMEN ENCOUNTER HANDICAPS IN 3-ALARM WORKER

Delayed Alarm, Heavy Toxic Smoke, Freak Construction and Crowds of Curious, Highlight $100,000 Fire.

A GENERAL alarm fire of suspicious origin swept through an entire business block in Cambridge, Massachusetts on May 1, 1949, causing an estimated loss of $100,000. Seven firemen were hospitalized for injuries and eleven others were treated for smoke inhalation.

The cement and wood, one story building was triangular in shape and was dubbed the “Patron Building” by the people of the North Cambridge section. It housed various establishments such as Paul's Tire Shop located at the vertex of the building formed by the intersection of Cedar Street and Massachusetts Avenue, the Bell-in-Hand Cafe, the Genoa Grocery, and the Thomas J. Hartnett & Co., a liquor store; at the base of the triangle Harvey Street, were the Harvey Fish Store and the North Cambridge Italian-American Club. The Massachusetts Avenue stores had rear doors on Cedar Street permitting passage directly through the building.

At 5:30 P.M. a passerby came running into the Bell-in-Hand Cafe, leaving the windward door open behind him, and told the bartender that smoke was coming out of the Tire Shop. At the same time another bartender in the same establishment noticed flames coming from the ceiling at the far end of the room. The twenty patrons of the establishment were ordered out and the owner with the bartenders dragged out two television sets into the street. No one, however, closed the windward door or thought to immediately send in a fire alarm. Instead, bartenders threw glasses of water at the flames which were flickering through the crevices of a three-foot false ceiling. Meanwhile the fire worked its way through this ceiling, eventually spreading through the entire building.

A passerby who saw smoke coming from the front of the structure pulled in the first alarm at Box 79 at 5:40 P.M., fully ten minutes after the fire was first noticed.

The first arriving fire company, Engine 1, pulled up in front of the building on the leeward side. The wind at the time was blowing about twenty-five miles per hour. The firemen on the hose wagon of Engine 4 advanced booster lines into the building but were quickly repelled by the acrid smoke from the Tire Shop. Pumper 4 hooked up at a hydrant across the street and laid in three 2½ inch lines. The other first alarm assignment companies, Ladder 4 and Engines 1 and 8, drew up on the windward side of the building. Protected somewhat from the heavy smoke by the wind, these later companies did not experience as much trouble as the men on Engine 4. They were able to advance two 2½ inch lines into the rear of the Bell-in-Hand Cafe which was entirely enveloped in flame, due to the draft created by the brisk wind which came through the doors left open by fleeing patrons.

Deputy Chief Kilfoyle radioed a second alarm at 5:42. The second alarm companies were ordered to open up smoke vents in the roof to lessen the punishment being taken by their fellow firemen in the effort to get to the seat of the fire. The discharge of the pumped gases from burning rubber, tar paper and other combustibles through the roof allowed firemen to enter Paul's Tire Shop with hand lines. The firemen experienced considerable difficulty in venting...
From page 85 Ladder 3’s Company Journal of 1967:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thursday May 4</strong>th <strong>“cont.”</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>312</td>
<td>12:40 p.m. Bldg 15 – Simplex Ret 1:00 p.m. 18’ ladder – dismantled faulty electric motor and checked for possible extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>233</td>
<td>1:07 p.m. Box 233 False – Ret 1:18 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies</td>
<td>2:30 p.m. Supplies delivered by Pvt. Carroll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuel</td>
<td>3:00 p.m. Rec’d 226 gals – Gibbs Oil Co</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2763</td>
<td>4:21 p.m. Box 2763 – 64 State St. Ret 4:37 p.m. 100’ aerial – accidental alarm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roll Call</td>
<td>6:00 p.m. By Capt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duty</td>
<td>6:00 p.m. Capt. Anderson, Prvs. Mickle, Fraser, and Cotter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detail</td>
<td>6:00 p.m. Pvt. Largenton to Eng 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>6:00 p.m. test O.K.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batteries</td>
<td>6:00 p.m. A/B 1230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gong</td>
<td>6:00 p.m. O.K.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drill</td>
<td>6:00 – 7:30 p.m. With Eng 2 – Taking conscious and unconscious person down ladder, raising and lowering 20 ft. ladder – under wire lift with 20’ ladder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>289</td>
<td>10:13 p.m. – 26 Columbia St – mattress fire – checked for extension and ventilated. Ret 10:29 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Friday – May 5, 1967

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roll Call</td>
<td>8:00 A.M. by Capt. Anderson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duty</td>
<td>8:00 A.M. Lieut. Dudley, Pfts. Remington, Lawson, Sheehan, Scholl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batteries</td>
<td>8:00 A.M. O.K.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>8:00 A.M. O.K.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.L.</td>
<td>8:00 A.M. Pvt White since 4-13-67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports</td>
<td>8:00 A.M. 1-F1, 3-F6, 1 oil invoice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>8:00 A.M. Tested O.K.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>295</td>
<td>8:20 A.M. 239 Columbia Street Returned at 3:20 P.M.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
House Blaze Kills 2 Cambridge Babies

(By Jack Wharton) – Two young sisters perished in smoke and flame in their home at 239 Columbia St., Cambridge, Friday while their mother, after carrying two other children to safety, tried in vain to reach them. Pronounced dead on arrival at Cambridge City Hospital were 18-months old Karen Roper and her sister, Cheryl 3 ½. Under treatment at the same hospital for smoke inhalation was their brother, Bruce Roper, Jr. 4 ½, and their infant sister, Deborah, two months.

Mrs. Barbara Roper, 22, mother of the children, also was treated for shock and smoke inhalation, but was released later.

20 OTHERS ROUTED

More than 20 other tenants in the three –story complex of apartment buildings at 239, 241, and 243 Columbia were driven to the street by the fire.

The blaze, which Deputy Fire Chief Daniel Reagan said appeared to have started in the living room of the Roper apartment was discovered an 8:20 am, when Anthony Steathopoulos, 25, who lives across the street, heard the cracking of glass and saw flames in the Roper apartment. He phoned in the alarm, ran across the street. Mrs. Roper had already carried Bruce, Jr. and Deborah to safety and was trying to get back to the apartment to rescue the others.

But both she and Steathopoulos were unable to penetrate the blinding smoke. Steathopoulos ran around to a rear stairway and got up to the second floor, but when he kicked open the door of the Roper apartment fire and smoke gushed out at him and he was unable to get through.

By this time a second alarm had been sounded and fire apparatus was at the scene. Firemen John Watson and William Lawson got to the apartment, and crawled along the floor to the bedroom where the two sisters had been sleeping. Karen was huddled in the crib, and Cheryl was lying on the floor at the foot of the crib.

Those firemen got them out and rushed them to the hospital, but it was too late to save them.

Bruce Roper, Sr., father of the children was at work when the fire broke out, and arrived home shortly after his family had been taken to the hospital. He rushed there to comfort his wife.

Roper said his wife told him the fire started when a gas space heater exploded.

FIREMEN INJURED

Lawson and Watson were treated for some inhalation as was Fireman Herbert Martin, aide to Chief Reagan, who made a futile effort to reach the children before the apparatus arrived. Reagan and Martin were riding nearby in Hampshire Street when they heard the first alarm over their car radio and reached the house a few moments later.

Also injured in the blaze was Fire Lieutenant Kevin Fitzgerald, who was x-rayed at the hospital for a back injury.

Reagan called in the state Fire Marshal’s office to investigate the blaze.

- RECORD AMERICAN, BOSTON, SATURDAY, May 6, 1967
**Fire Activity**

**Box 5-361:** With heavy fire in possession of multiple building on arrival, five alarms were transmitted from Box 361 for the fire at 27 Prince Street on 25 November 2008. Two duplex, 3 story, wood-frame OMDs were severely damaged with limited damage to surrounding exposure buildings. Initially assigned companies, using decisive and aggressive action under command of **DFC Edward Mahoney** of Division 1, were able to simultaneously complete searches, rescue trapped victims, establish water supplies, protect exposures, and fight the main fire. One man was rescued via ladder and one woman was rescued via stairway, both under rapidly deteriorating conditions. The woman victim unfortunately passed away from her injuries more than one week after the fire. Sixteen engines, 6 trucks 2 squads, the rescue, 5 line chiefs, and numerous staff and support units operated at the fire. The Group 4 was on duty.

The time frame is as follows:
- Box 361 @ 0332 hours
- 45-361 @ 0337 hours by Engine 6
- 2-361 @ 0341 hours by Division 1
- 3-361 @ 0355 hours
- 4-361 @ 0424 hours
- 5-361 @ 0500 hours
- All out @ 1647 hours

**Box 4-853:** Companies arrived to find rapidly extending fire in the rear of 68 thru 80 Lexington Avenue on the morning of 9 December 2008. Four alarms were ultimately transmitted from Box 853. Under direction of **DFC John Cotter** of Division 2, companies again completed an aggressive attack to complete interior searches, protect threatened exposures, establish water supplies and contain and extinguish the fire. Three 3 ½ story, wood-frame OMDs were damaged by the fire. Ten engines, 5 trucks, 2 squads, the rescue company, 5 line chiefs, and multiple staff and support units operated. Group 1 was on duty.

The time frame is as follows:
- Box 853 @ 0813 hours
- 2-853 @ 0819 hours by Division 2
- 3-853 @ 0825
- 4-853 @ 0911
- All out @ 0830 hours on 10 Dec 2008

**Annual Run Totals and Stats**

**Annual Totals - Calendar Year 2008**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engine</th>
<th>Runs</th>
<th>Bldg Fires</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engine 1</td>
<td>2297</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engine 2</td>
<td>3035</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engine 3</td>
<td>1583</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engine 4</td>
<td>1564</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engine 5</td>
<td>2063</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Incidents | 13,838 |
The Chief of Department regrets to announce the death of **Fire Lieutenant William R. Skelley, Jr.** of Engine Company No. 9 - retired. Lieutenant Skelley was appointed to the Cambridge Fire Department on 21 February 1943. His assignments were as follows:

- **21 Feb 1943**: military substitute to Engine Company No. 1
- **16 Aug 1943**: permanent Engine Company No. 1
- **15 April 1951**: promoted to Fire Lieutenant, Ladder Company No. 3 pivot to Engine Company No. 2
- **2 Jan 1955**: Engine Company No. 2
- **5 March 1972**: Engine Company No. 9

Lieutenant Skelley retired on 31 March 1982. He died on 26 November 2008. He was born on 1 March 1917.

The Chief of Department regrets to announce the death of **Fire Lieutenant William E. Joyce, Sr.** of Engine Company No. 1 - retired. Lieutenant Joyce was appointed to the Cambridge Fire Department on 29 June 1952. His assignments were as follows:

- **29 June 1952**: Rescue Company No. 1
- **22 May 1960**: Engine Company No. 6
- **15 March 1967**: promoted to Fire Lieutenant, Engine Company No. 3
- **29 Oct 1970**: Civil Defense Training Officer
- **3 Jan 1971**: Civil Defense
- **15 July 1983**: Assistant Training Officer – Fire Headquarters
- **1 Sept 1974**: Civil Defense

Fire Lieutenant William Joyce was a United States Navy veteran of World War II.

Condolences to:

Chief Mechanic Ronald Gardner (Tech Services) on the death of his mother, Mary Gardner-Barron.

The Bennett family on the death of Harold S. Bennett, the father of Fire Captain Barry Bennett – Engine 1(deceased)

Toys for Tots

Thank you once again for your support and cooperation in the Toys-for-Tots effort.

We filled a 24' box truck to about 2/3 capacity. This was better than expected, and I think a little better than last year, but way down from previous years.

The “old” Marines were quite pleased to see us and were very appreciative. Semper Fi.

Thanks also to Medford Firefighter Ed Nolan who made the box truck available and drove the truck. Thanks also to Steve Lopez (Tech Services) for his assistance.

- DFC Gerry Mahoney

Letters

11/27/08

Dear Cambridge Firefighters,

We live on Fairmont Street. On Monday night, you saved our house and our family from the fire on Prince Street. Thank you very much. We really appreciated everything that you did for us and many others. Please share our thanks with the other firefighters who helped us all throughout this whole week.
Dear Firefighters,

Thank you for being so brave and helping a lot of people’s lives. Thanks so much.

From: The Tearney Family

Written by Allie Tearney (12 years old) and Bobby Tearney (9 years old)

Patty O’Connell
Dover Street
Somerville, MA 02144

November 25, 2008

Cambridge Fire Department
Fire Headquarters
491 Broadway
Cambridge, MA 02138

Gentlepeople:

I write to acknowledge and thank members of your staff for their assistance to me on Saturday, November 15, 2008. I unfortunately fainted (twice!) while standing in a checkout line at Shaw’s Supermarket in Porter Square; a paramedic named Woody and another fellow whose name I did not get assisted me. A police officer was there as well.

My assumption is that these men came from the Fire Station on Mass. Ave. north of Porter Square. Please post this letter through Fire Department channels so that these guys get the recognition they deserve.

I cannot tell you what a relief it was to have them there to help me. I am completely recovered and have much to be grateful for this Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,

Patty O’Connell

Editor’s note: This incident, #8005347, occurred at 1649 hours on 15 November 2008. Engine 4, Squad 4, Professional Ambulance, and Police Car 11-R were dispatched. Members on duty were: Engine 4: Fire Captain Larry Brogan, and Firefighters Ken Hugh and David Vigilante; Squad 4: A/Fire Lieutenant Mathew Wood and Firefighter Raymond Vaillancourt; Professional Ambulance Paramedic Jenn Ashe, Paramedic James Griffith, EMT Daniel O’Brien; and PD Car 11-R Officer Flynn.

Chief Gerald R. Reardon Cambridge Fire Department
Cambridge Fire Department Headquarters
491 Broadway
Cambridge, MA 02138
December 19, 2008

Dear Sir:

I would like to share with you my recent experience.

I was home on Tuesday, 12.09 with my 2 year old daughter when I looked out my rear window at 8:10 am and saw billows of black smoke and enormous flames coming out the back of a Lexington Ave triple-decker home. I froze. I didn’t know what to do. I could only stand by and watch in awe as firefighters arrived and quickly took action.

I had not witnessed a house fire before this day. As the first house was burning I saw the adjacent blue triple-decker start to smoke out of the third floor. Would my home catch fire from ashes blown by the freezing wet wind? Did everyone get out of the houses on Lexington Ave? My mind raced with feelings of terror and powerlessness.

I watched hour after hour as firefighters put themselves in harm’s way in order to protect the community. The only comfort to be had from the massive devastation and heartbreak at the end of the day was that no one was seriously injured and that a group of firefighters had banded together to help others in need.

The firefighters I saw in action displayed courage, professionalism, dedication, and integrity. I cannot thank you and you department enough for your invaluable service – on this day and everyday. You are true heroes!

Very respectfully,

Rebecca Betlyon

Grozier Road

Cc: Robert Healy

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Belmont Fire Department
Headquarters
299 Trapelo Road
Belmont, Massachusetts 02478

September 29, 2008

Chief Gerald R. Reardon

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Cambridge Fire Department for the mutual aid assistance received on September 26, 2008 at our 3-alarm fire. On behalf of the Belmont Fire Department, the Town officials and myself, we are very proud of the performance of your Department. Although the fire did a lot of damage, your Department did an exceptional job in helping it not extend to any other homes.

Thank you for all the support you gave throughout this fire. Please extend to Division 2, and those members on Engine 9, Engine 5, Squad 4, and Ladder 1 who responded to 25 Flett Road that their help is greatly appreciated, and please offer our thanks for their assistance and for a job well done. Without mutual aid assistance like that from your Department, the outcome of the fire could have been even worse.

Sincerely,

David Frizzell
Chief of Department
Paul Lenart and his wife recently stopped by the quarters of Engine 4 and Squad 4 to thank the members for saving his life. Pictured above are FF Hugh Devlin (Squad 4), F.Capt. Gregory Carter (Squad 4), Peggy Lenart, Paul Lenart, and EMT-P James Griffith (Professional EMS).

Photo by FF Laura Prunty (Engine 4)

On 18 October 2008 at 0933 hours, Incident # 8004328, Engine 8, Squad 4, and Professional Ambulance PM5 were dispatched to Fayerweather Street for an EMS run. Following a witnessed arrest, immediate CPR, use of AutoPulse, defibrillation, and advanced medical care, Mr. Lenart was successfully revived. Operating members were:

Engine 8: F.Lt. Robert Walsh, FF Stephon Kinn, and FFOP John Pasquarello
Squad 4: F. Captain Gregory Carter and FF Hugh Devlin
Professional Ambulance: James Griffith, EMT-P; Robert Johnson, Jr. EMT-B; James DiClemente, EMT-B; and Brian Veivia, EMT-B.

Congratulations for a job well done and another life saved!

Safety Tips

- **Always wear your seat belt when the apparatus is in motion!**
- **Always fasten your SCBA waist strap!**
- **Wear your hood!**

“Failing to buckle up is a gamble our members shouldn’t take.”

- IAFF General President Harold A. Schaitberger

America’s Heroes
On Thursday, 13 November 2008 the Central Square Post Office (02139) was rededicated as the **Clifton Merriman Post Office Building**.

**Clifton Merriman** (8/29/1893 to 7/3/1989) was a lifetime Cambridge resident and was one of the United States Army's most dedicated African-American Soldiers of World War I. In Cambridge, he lived on West Street for many years and was nearly 96 years old when he died in 1989.

The World War I Army Sergeant sailed to France in the fall of 1917, and after received training in trench warfare, served with COL, 372nd Infantry, 93rd Division and saw action on the Meuse-Argonne, Loraine, and Alsace Campaigns. On 27 September 1918, he was credited with the capture of a large machine gun nest which had been inflicting heavy losses on his platoon. After being severely gassed, Sergeant Merriman received treatment at a first aid station and returned to the front lines to participate in the capture of Sechault, Bussy Farm, and several villages and towns on the Plains of Monthois.

Clifton Merriman received the United States Army’s Distinguished Service Cross for “extraordinary heroism and valor in combat” from General “Black Jack” Pershing. He was awarded the Medaille Militaire and the Croix de Guerre with Palm from the government of France. He was also a recipient of the Verdun Medal and the Purple Heart.

After 47 years of service with the United States Postal Service, on 23 October 1992, the Post Office in Central Square was named the Clifton Merriman Post Office Building, the first federal building in New England dedicated to an African-American.

*Editor’s note: Thanks to Bob Stevens of Veterans Services for supplying the information about Sergeant Clifton Merriman.*

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**Information**

Please submit any information, photographs, or narratives for inclusion in the **Company Journal**.

**E-mail list**

If any retirees or friends of the Cambridge Fire Department wish to be added to the **Company Journal** e-mail list, send us the e-mail address!

**Websites**

Visit the Cambridge Fire Department website at [www.Cambridgefire.org](http://www.Cambridgefire.org)


“Old minds are like old horses; you must exercise them if you wish to keep them in working order.”

- John Adams

REMEMBER THE MEN AND WOMEN SERVING IN OUR ARMED SERVICES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.
THEY ARE PROTECTING OUR COUNTRY, OUR LIBERTY, AND OUR FREEDOM.
THANK OUR VETERANS!
Brothers and Sisters,
STAY BRAVE!
STAY VIGILANT!
STAY SAFE!

John J. Gelinas
Chief of Operations
Cambridge Fire Department
491 Broadway
Cambridge, MA  02138
617-349-4970