

# Hall of Flame



## News

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## 1935 American La France Restored Don Hale Creates Another Masterpiece

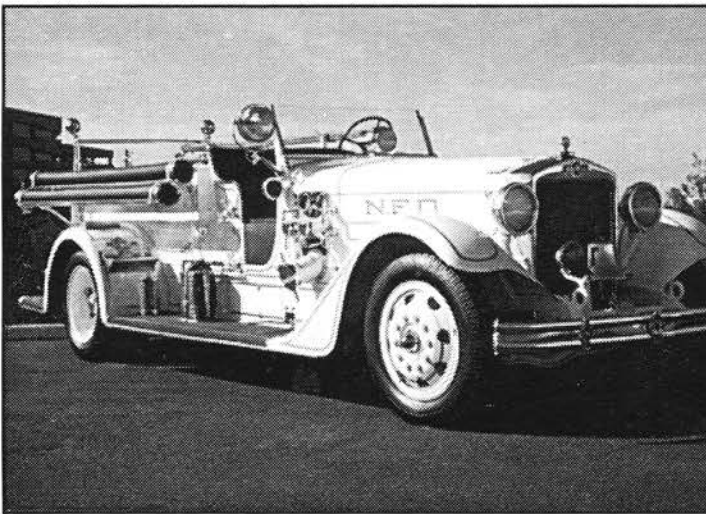
In November Don Hale put the finishing touches to the Hall of Flame's rare and beautiful Model 400 Metropolitan fire engine built in 1935 by American La France for the fire department of Norfolk, Nebraska. The project took about 5 months of Don's time. The entire rig was stripped to bare metal, all dents were repaired, the engine, drive train

pump's instrument panel and the metal fittings for hand rails and tool holders. Since we have no delivery photos of the rig or photos of the rig in service, these fragments were important. Don refurbished the instrument panel and re-upholstered the seat, and the museum's storage collection yielded a spotlight, siren, suction strainer, play pipe, and related equipment.

Bernie loaned his patterns of the rig's unique cast aluminum art deco style corner pieces on the rear deck, and we were able to obtain a pair of fine castings at a local foundry.

We plan to license and insure the rig to make it available for public events, together with the 1951

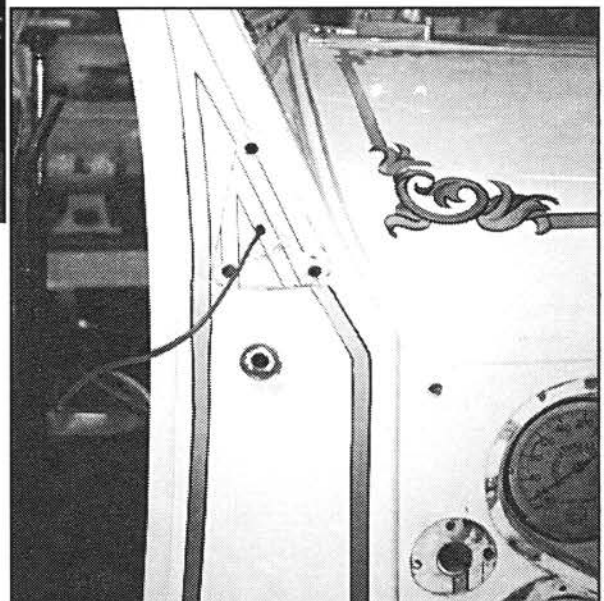
*(Continued on page 3)*



*Above: 1935 Model 400 Metropolitan*

*Right: Fragments of the original decoration scheme and paint color survived beneath some of the rig's fittings.*

and frame were cleaned and repainted, and almost every plated piece was re-chromed, including the bumpers, radiator shell, and headlights. The engine was checked for tune, but donor Bernie Lowe had previously returned the rig to excellent operating condition. Don found several fragments of the rig's original paint color and trim as he removed the



*Nation's largest Museum of Firefighting*

From the Director . . .



*Dr. Peter M. Molloy,  
Executive Director of  
the Hall of Flame*

The past few months have been hectic but extremely rewarding, as we begin the completion of the museum's largest, and arguably its most important project — the National Firefighting Hall of Heroes. We have been fortunate to obtain the services of Ms. Erin Grassie, a recent graduate of Arizona State University with a specialty in Industrial Design, and a member of the team that created the outstanding exhibit at the new Arizona Science Center in downtown Phoenix. We have the enthusiastic support of *Firehouse Magazine*, whose annual selections of Community Service and Rescue Heroes form the core of the Hall of Heroes' exhibit. Without the cooperation of *Firehouse* Editor in Chief Harvey Eisner we would have had a much more difficult task in creating the Hall of Heroes.

Another piece of good fortune has been the excellent repository of information about fallen firefighters that has been created and maintained by the National Fallen Firefighter Memorial at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Ms. Kathy Gerstner, who maintains the fallen firefighter records at the Academy, has been a tremendous help, and the Academy's web site and publications have been invaluable in creating the Hall of Heroes' database of firefighters who have died in the line of duty.

The Hall's volunteers have become more and more critical to the museum's operations, participating in just about every aspect of our operations, from fund raising to leading fire safety tours. Volunteer Captain Ron Deutsch and his brigade of volunteers are key players in the Hall's operations. I regret that we lost an important member of this brigade to cancer after an epic struggle — John O'Donnell will be sorely missed.

In addition to new exhibits we have been upgrading the existing galleries. Last summer we concentrated our efforts on Gallery 2, a large room containing an important part of the motorized collection. Thanks to funds from the Capital Campaign, we have been able to install a number of upgrades to this gallery. And I am happy to announce that the museum now has its own web site at <http://www.hallofflame.org>.

The Capital Campaign continues to advance, with significant new donations from a number of Arizona based companies. Most recently we received over \$4,000 in travel vouchers from America West Airlines. We plan to raffle these vouchers this Fall.

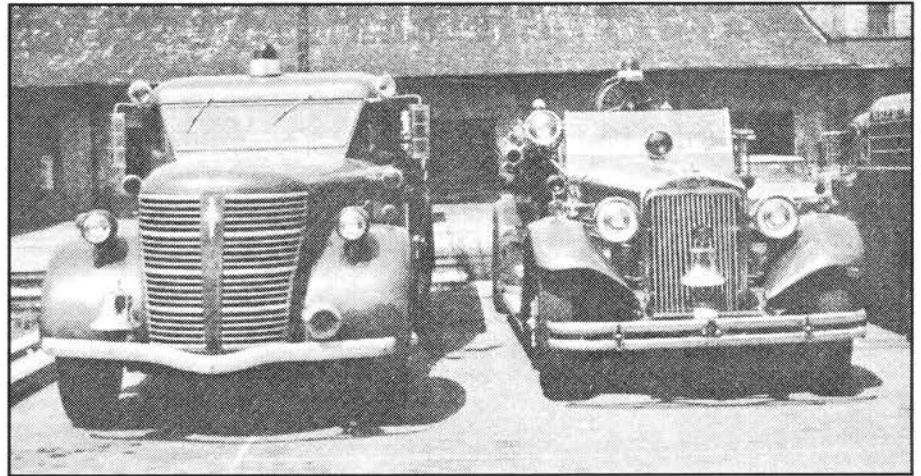
For our digitized members, I have recently changed my e-mail address. I can be reached at [petermolloy@hallofflame.org](mailto:petermolloy@hallofflame.org)

(Continued from page 1)

Mack, 1941 Ford, and 1930 Ahrens-Fox that are already used for off-site events.

The 400 is regarded by many fire buffs as the most elegant fire engine ever produced in the United States. Its long, narrow hood, with the pump mounted forward of the driving compartment, bears a strong resemblance to the lines of the Duesenberg, Cadillac and Packard touring sedans of the 1930s. Only about 150 of the Model 400s with the large 240 horsepower V-12 E Type engine were built between the production run from late 1934 through most of 1938. The rigs were just too expensive for the budgets of most cities during the Great Depression. Our rig is equipped with a 1,250 gpm rotary pump, a pump style much favored by American La France.

About 15 Model 400s have survived, of which about a dozen are



A Model 500 at left, a Model 400 at right. Readers can make their own judgments about styling.

refurbished or restored. Few if any of the Model 400 aerial, water tower, quads or ladder trucks have survived.

In 1938 ALF introduced the 400's replacement — to the surprise of no one titled the Model 500. This model, essentially unchanged with the Model 600, was in production until 1946. Its styling was

influenced by the streamlining craze of the 30s and 40s. Most collectors view it as one of the ugliest fire engines ever produced, although its engineering was as good as any other engine of its day. The Hall of Flame lacks a 500 or 600 in its collection, but we hope to remedy this situation soon.



## New Murals for Gallery I

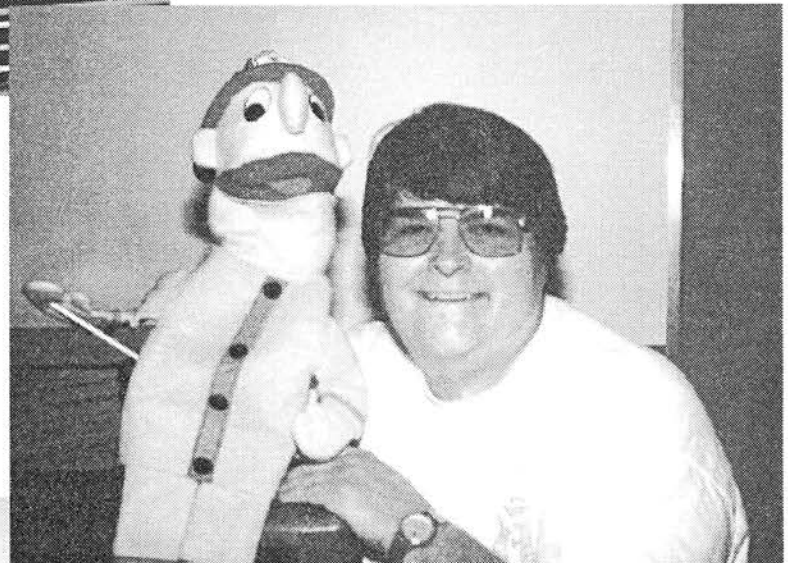
In August artist Karen McLain, pictured at left, used her talents to create three large murals on the outside wall of the Hall's new theater in Gallery I. We chose three covers from 19th century editions of *Harper's Magazine* and the *Scientific American Magazine*. The first mural is of an 1855 Silsby steam fire engine. The middle mural, which Karen is shown completing, is of a New York Fire Department engine company in 1880. The final mural is of a large fire-boat, the New York Fire Department's *New Yorker*, in action in 1890 with deluge guns in operation. Karen projects copies of the original artwork on a wall, traces it, and then uses an airbrush to color it in. She has created similar murals at several other museums in the Phoenix area. We plan to use her talents to create murals in some of the other galleries, as well as the outside wall facing the museum parking lot.

# Volunteer Activities



*Above: John O'Donnell explains the operation of an eighteenth century fire engine to a group of burn victims at a Christmas party in 1995. John often volunteered his time to lead tours, despite the fact that he lived over 25 miles from the Hall of Flame.*

*Right: Museum volunteer Roberta Bramlet with one of the puppets which she uses for Saturday puppet workshops for young visitors. Roberta gives several shows each year at the Hall of Flame. She also lives a considerable distance from the Hall.*



*In November the Volunteers organized and staged a swap met at the museum similar in size to the meet organized in 1996. Several dozen vendors from all over the western states attended, as well as displays from local firms. The handsome Ford engine at right belongs to Metro Sprinkler Company. At left John Dorgan sets out a fine display of sirens and lights.*

The volunteers are now involved in just about every aspect of museum operations. Several have qualified to drive those pieces of apparatus, which the museum uses at outside events. During October the volunteers drove museum rigs as far as Luke Air Force Base, a trip of over 30 miles one way. Many of these events generate income for the museum. The volunteers also organized a successful firematics swap meet in November, and recently spent two weekends in repainting the fire safety exhibit. Captain Ron Deutsch has increased

the roster of volunteers and organized weekly activities ranging from dusting of apparatus to demonstration of the Hall's collection of Japanese apparatus at a special event organized for Japanese American community in Phoenix.

In May we lost one of our charter volunteers, John O'Donnell. John died from an extremely virulent cancer which he fought valiantly for two years (he was given only a few weeks to live when the cancer was originally discovered). Despite his illness he continued to participate in volunteer activities. John was perhaps our best interpreter of the museum's exhibits for school groups. We miss him greatly.

# Hall of Flame Museum of Firefighting

## Home Page



The Hall of Flame is the world's largest museum of firefighting. We have over 30,000 square feet of exhibits, with almost 90 fully restored pieces of fire apparatus on display, dating from 1725 to 1961. Most of the exhibits are American, but we have many pieces from England, France, Austria, Germany, and Japan.

The Hall of Flame is sponsored by the National Historical Fire Foundation, which was established in 1961 by George F. Getz, Jr. The Hall is located in Phoenix, Arizona.

Please browse this site and do not hesitate to provide some comments. If you wish to receive a brochure or membership information, either click on Literature Request at this site or call the museum at 602-275-3473 (Voice) or 602-275-0896 (Fax). Or contact us by e-mail at [Webmaster@HallofFlame](mailto:Webmaster@HallofFlame).

**Who We Are | Exhibits | Collections | National Firefighting Hall of Heroes | Membership | Volunteers | Hours & Location | What's New | Literature Request | Related Web Sites**

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6101 East Van Buren St., Phoenix, AZ 85008, (602) 275-3473 (Voice) or 602-275-0896 (Fax)

Send comments on this web site to [Webmaster@HallofFlame](mailto:Webmaster@HallofFlame). Last revised 10/15/97

## Check Out Our Web Site!

**W**e invite our members to visit the Hall of Flame's new web site at <http://www.hallofflame.org>. We now have a 12 page web site with an easy to remember URL. Members are invited to send comments to Executive Director Peter Molloy at his e-mail address at [webmaster@hallofflame.org](mailto:webmaster@hallofflame.org) or [petermolloy@hallofflame.org](mailto:petermolloy@hallofflame.org). The site lists all of the museum's major holdings, describes its programs, and includes many pictures of pieces in the collection. It is updated periodically.

# National Firefighting Hall of Heroes Nears Completion



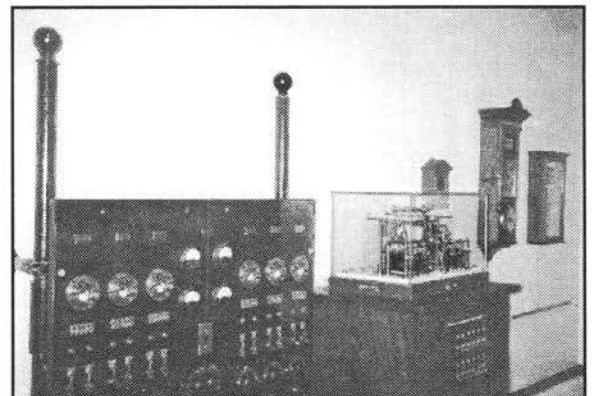
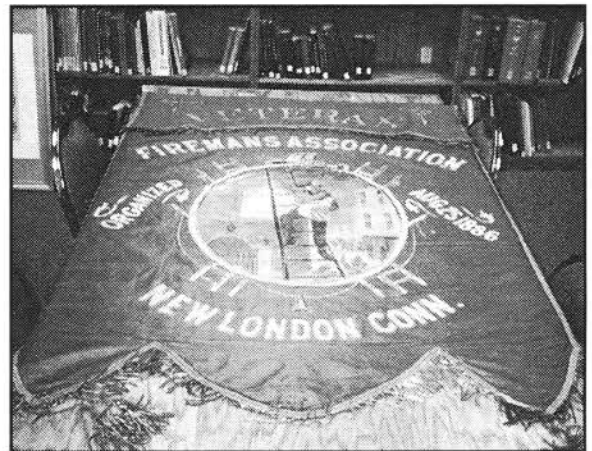
*Left: Exhibit designer Erin Grassie shows one of the three silkscreens by local artist Joe Burdar that will introduce the exhibit. When the plexiglass sign is attached to a panel, the text will no longer be reversed. Erin has a degree in industrial design from ASU. She helped to assemble the impressive new exhibit at the Arizona Science Center.*

*Below: This silk banner was recently fully restored and prepared for exhibit by a textile conservator. The banner was made in 1892 for the New London, Connecticut Fireman's Association. Most fire departments had similar banners. The banner is now on display in the Hall of Heroes Gallery.*

The National Firefighting Hall of Heroes is nearing completion, with an estimated opening date of April first. The project has required an enormous amount of time and effort, made even more important by the seriousness of the exhibit's three goals: recognition of firefighters who have died in the line of duty; recognition of firefighters who have received awards for heroism; and the social history of the Fire Service in the United States.

In April of each year *Firehouse Magazine* publishes its selection of firefighters from around the United States who deserve national recognition. *Firehouse* provides the Hall of Flame with the written and photographic submission data for these individuals, and the museum staff places the information on the walls of the gallery. This is being done for the winners for 1995 and 1996, and will be done as soon as the 1997 selectees are announced. The staff has created a database, including photographs, listing all winners of national and local awards which are brought to our attention. This database will be available to visitors to search in the gallery itself.

The staff is using the resources of the National Firefighting Academy, the National EMS Memorial, and other agencies to honor on the gallery's walls those firefighters who have died in the line of duty. These individuals, too, will be available in the computerized database. The Hall of Heroes will never be complete, since the sources for these subjects are widely scattered, especially for the years before 1980. The museum's website contains an application form for the submission of qualified firefighters. We also invite the museum's members to make nominations.



*Part of the exhibit is this fully operational alarm room, installed by volunteer Dick Stuve.*