

# The Fire Mark

The Newsletter of the Canadian Fire Fighters Museum  
PORT HOPE, ONTARIO, CANADA • JUNE 2019

## Report from the Co-Chairs:

Welcome new and returning members. Our annual membership drive is on and we are gratified to see our numbers growing. Our Annual General Meeting is June 17th where your voice as a member is invited and encouraged. It will also be a volunteer recognition event, (see article following).

The CFFM committees have been busy these past months. The Collections and Site Selection Committees are energized and working towards goals. We look forward to sharing detailed updates at the AGM.

Thank you for participating in the recent 2nd annual Rain Barrel fundraiser. The majority of our sales were from social media outlets and we will pursue this format going forward. Door to door delivery of pamphlets is a terrific way to talk directly with our supporters and we enjoyed that contact. However, printing of flyers carries a financial cost. Instead, look for us at local events like the Wesleyville Pop-Up Market and monthly at the Port Hope Farmers Market where you can drop by to hear more about our plans, buy a t-shirt and of course, purchase a membership.

After many years with Comtech Fire Credit Union, we are moving our financial services to Ganaraska Financial Credit Union. Even in



*CFFM Board and Collections Committee Members, together with our hosts, on a recent trip to visit the storage areas of the Ingenium Science and Technology Museum, Ottawa. More on last page.*

2019, the convenience of local banking can't be beat. Comtech were generous supporters of CFFM and we thank them for their years of business and guidance.

Hope to see you June 17th.

*Co-Chairs – Kathy and Michelle*

## Notice of the Annual General Meeting

**Monday, June 17th, 2019, 7:00 pm**  
**Port Hope Public Library,**  
**31 Queen Street, Port Hope ON**

Please join us for the 33rd Annual General Meeting. We will be saying farewell and thank you to some of our outgoing Directors.

We do not have a full roster of board members to present for your ratification. We are seeking new volunteers. At press time, there are

several vacancies.

The board is seeking to fill the role of Secretary. As a member of the executive committee, and working closely with the Chair, the Secretary is the main record keeper of the CFFM. The Secretary gives notice of meetings and events, distributes the agenda and minutes and keeps a record of the meetings and actions of the Board.

The board is also seeking to fill the role of Treasurer. As a member of the executive committee, the Treasurer is the museum's key liaison with the professional accountants and presents, for approval, updated budget and financial reports at each board meeting. The Treasurer is the chair of the Finance Committee.

If interested, or have any questions please contact Michelle Haney-Kileeg, Governance Committee Chair at 905 751 9182.



*Above: An Amoskeag steamer of the 1860's in the collection of the Museum of Science and Technology, Ottawa. Possibly the second oldest of its kind in Canada and one of two the Ottawa Museum owns.*

## The First Steam Fire Engines in Canada

**B**y the 1850s, the industrial revolution was well underway all around the globe and powerful machinery was either replacing manual labour or making the worker's job much easier. Steam power was a very important part of this phenomena and was being used to run factories, municipal pumping stations, ships and boats of all sizes, railroad locomotives, farm tractors and even some horseless carriages (cars). Steam could provide power which could rival that of flowing water, but steam had the distinct advantage of being portable (not tied to a riverside). Steam power was therefore being widely adopted in many fields.

The exception which proves the rule, would appear to be firefighting. In the 1850's firefighting in Canada, and more generally in North America, was still carried out by large groups of volunteers who depended almost exclusively on manpower. Bucket brigades were still very much in use, whether they were throwing

water directly onto a fire or supplying tub pumps that relayed the water to the fire via leather hoses. The various configurations of fire pumps were carried or pulled to the scene by hand and then operated by means of hand pumping, an exhausting chore. Most fire "companies" had not even taken to using horses, let alone considered the advantages of using steam power.

This, despite a functional steam fire engine having been created decades earlier in the UK and steam fire engines being in service and performing well in several European countries by the 1830's. The problem it seems was resistance to change. The public was leery and distrustful of many of these new machines. This resulted in one early steam fire engine being attacked and destroyed by a mob in England during a live test at an actual fire scene. Beyond that, the firemen themselves in North America were bitterly opposed to the introduction of any machine that would reduce their numbers.

Fire clubs, or companies, were large and very powerful political lobby groups in Canada, as in the US. They received financial backing from both

the insurance industry and their local municipalities which provided for flashy uniforms, club house-like halls, and highly decorative equipment. They enjoyed a great deal of prestige in the community. Leaders of fire companies often used their positions of authority and public adoration from which to launch careers in politics.

Firefighting was also a highly competitive pursuit with rival companies sometimes getting into brawls at the fire scene or even sabotaging the other's equipment and efforts to put out a fire. In such an emotionally charged and competitive endeavour, numbers were everything. A larger club could chase off a smaller one, put out the fire and claim the glory for themselves, even in cases where they had not been the first to arrive on scene. It was disreputable, counter-productive and in many communities Mayors and Councils had seen enough. When practical steam fire engines presented an opportunity to reduce manpower and overall costs, clipping the wings of these powerful and troublesome groups, they eventually went for it, over the strenuous objections of the firemen.

The first steam fire engine to be placed into service in Canada was purchased by the City of Halifax, Nova Scotia in March of 1860. To help the reader place this year in history, a 19 year old Prince Albert Edward, later becoming King Edward VII, laid the cornerstone for our first parliament buildings, which were destroyed by fire in 1916 and replaced by the current parliament buildings. This was also three years prior to the Battle of Gettysburg and five years prior to the surrender of General Robert E Lee and other Confederate forces, ending the American Civil War.

## Fundraising Report

**T**he 2nd annual Rain Barrel Fundraiser went smoothly this year and made a very modest profit. We are grateful for your continued support and to Walter Hillman, of Trade Tech Industries, for opening his site for the two days necessary for delivery and sale.

Because the Museum has recurring costs (separate from our operations) incl. insurance, storage fees etc., we continue to plan local, small-scale fundraising events. When we find a permanent home, there will be notice of a more comprehensive fundraising strategy. Social Media will be our main outreach for events; stay tuned for news of the CFFM Golf Tournament on September 29th at Dalewood Golf Club.

And we'd love to have you visit our monthly presence at the Port Hope Farmer's Market. Every bit of your support is important to the future of CFFM.

*John Appleman, Fundraising*



### Former Museum Volunteer, Ruth Marvin, Passes

**I**t is sad to report that Ruth Marvin, a past winner of CFFM's "Volunteer of the Year Award" passed away earlier this year. Ruth was a valued member of the CFFM team and was instrumental in securing many valuable artefacts of forestry fire fighting for the Museum. Plans are to honour her contributions in our future facility.



*Above: It was a grim winter day when the gentlemen from Orillia made the trek to Port Hope to pick up the Hose Cart and Hand Pumper which had been on loan to CFFM for many years.*

### Where are they Now?

**T**here are museums, large and small, across this country. When people start to think about their community history and how they arrived at their present-day situations, they often band together to tell their stories and pool their resources of artifacts from those earlier days by establishing a museum that illustrates in a concrete fashion how their predecessors lived and what tools they had to help them. Once museums get established, they start to interact with other museums to share research and to lend and borrow artifacts that allow them to jointly tell their stories through special displays.

The Canadian Fire Fighters Museum has been no exception. As many readers will be aware, some of CFFM's large display items were on loan from other institutions. When the old building closed and the collections went into storage, these items were returned to the lenders rather than have them disappear from public view while a new building was being sought.

The City of Orillia is located between Lakes Simcoe and Couchiching in Central Ontario. It was established on the line of northward transportation from established Lake Ontario settlements as transportation shifted

to overland routes that broke the ties to shipping by water routes along the shore of Lake Ontario. It experienced a similar historical trajectory to other new settlements in the mid to late nineteenth century. Early buildings made of wood that suffered disastrous fires which led to demands for better fire prevention and firefighting services from the municipal government of the day. A look at the type of equipment and organization in 19th century Port Hope was presented in the July 2018 edition of Fire Mark as part of the article "Fire Engines 1.0" and Orillia's experience would have been similar.

From the Orillia website, "In 1875, the population of the Village of Orillia reached 2,000. That allowed Orillia to become a town, which soon elected a mayor, reeve, deputy reeve, and nine councillors to office.

One of their first projects was to purchase a lot at 27 Peter Street North and build a fire hall about 40 feet by 60 feet with a 55-foot tower. Twenty years later, in 1896, council contracted local builder J.R. Eaton to tear down the first building and construct a new two-storey solid brick hall with a full basement and heated tower for drying the hoses. That building is still standing today."

Three of CFFM's "Horse and Hand" displays were on loan from the City of Orillia Museum. They had previously

been on display at the Simcoe County Museum from sometime in the 1960s but were returned to Orillia in 1999 when Orillia stopped funding that museum. Orillia found short term storage space but then lent them to CFFM, which was then growing its own displays, and Orillia's hand-drawn piano style pumper, the horse-drawn ladder wagon and the hand-drawn hose reel added nicely to the story of early equipment and firefighting in Canada before steam powered pumps took over. When the three pieces returned to Orillia in December, 2017 while CFFM was packing up, the Orillia firefighters were proud to receive those pieces of their history. The hose reel received their immediate attention and underwent restoration as described in the following article by Captain Glenn Higgins of the Orillia Fire Service.

*Dennis Waddington*



*The restored Hose Cart at the Orillia headquarters.*

### The 1800's Hose Cart of the Orillia Fire Department

The cart was used in the mid 1800's to 1923 when a new La France chemical hose-ladder truck was purchased. The cart was used in the town of Orillia and would have been dispatched from the 27 Peter Street Fire Station. The hose cart was decommissioned and later sent to Simcoe County Museum in Midhurst on loan up until the mid to late 1990's when it came back to Orillia Fire Department. It had a winter stored at 68 West Street South Fire Station under tarps outside. The preservation of the hose cart, hand pump and ladder cart was made possible by the move of the

equipment and loan for display to the Canadian Fire Fighters Museum in Port Hope.

The carts and pump came back again to Orillia after the CFFM had to vacate its location in December 2017. The equipment was stored again for the winter at the Simcoe County Museum as a short-term answer to the storage problem.

The pump and the ladder cart were stored back at the Orillia Fire Department until the carts could be put on display or into more permanent storage.

In the summer of 2018, the pump and ladder cart were put on display by Orillia Museum of Art and History at the Orillia Square Mall for four months in a vacant store location.

The Orillia Museum of Art and History owns all three pieces of apparatus. They have a loan

agreement with Orillia Fire Department for the hose cart.

The hose cart was restored in the winter of 2018, addressing the wheel rot. A local Foundry pattern shop (Kubota) made the seamless repair.

Captain Higgins cleaned and painted the

hose cart having a custom wooden tool box made by retired Orillia fire fighter Russ Middleton. There was some metal fabrication that needed to be completed and Captain Rory Greenwood of Rama Fire Department stepped up to lend a hand. This allowed for the addition of a wooden pulling handle and rope rings.

The final touches were completed with gold pin striping applied by hand by Captain Higgins.

In the fall of 2018, the cart was ready for display. Orillia Museum of Art and History had a display called "from the Ashes" which featured major fires in Orillia's History focusing on the downtown core. The artifacts were lent

where required by private donators and again the fire fighters helped out by dismantling the hose cart and carrying the pieces of the cart to the second floor of the Museum for the display.

In January 2019 the display finished and the cart was dismantled again and moved to its new home in the lobby of Orillia's Fire Department's Headquarters at 500 Gill Street. (as seen in picture) The hose cart has been well travelled over its rich past and now is proudly on display back at home in the fire station.

Thank you to all that have saved this piece of history.

### Status report on the hand pump and ladder cart:

They are again at the Simcoe County Museum for the winter and the Orillia Museum is still looking for a solution to the storage/display of these larger items.

*CORRECTION: In the previous issue of Fire Mark (January, 2019) the caption to the image at the top of page 3 should have been "Above: The Whitby Merryweather steam fire engine that saved the town of Oshawa from destruction by fire, 9 December 1872. (Canadian Illustrated News, 4 Jan 1873 - image courtesy of Whitby Archives)"*

### Kelly Morgan Batten Honoured

We are proud to announce that one of our Board of Directors, was honoured with the Realtax Originality Scholarship Award. Kelly Morgan-Batten is currently our Site Selection Chair, a fitting responsibility for someone completing her diploma in Real Property Administration at Seneca College. Kelly practiced as a trained audiologist owning Real Hearing Solutions in Port Hope. However, Kelly's thirst for knowledge led her to embark upon yet another profession — real estate. Kelly is a fine example of a Life Long Learner. Not only is Kelly



an accomplished professional, she is a wife, mother and grandmother!

#### Award Description:

Realtax Originality Scholarship – RPA Awarded to a graduating student in the Real Property Administration program who has demonstrated innovative, outside-the-box thinking and has shown creative solutions in their approach to the program curriculum. The recipient has earned the recognition of their faculty and peers and has made a positive impact on the classroom environment. The recipient's positive attitude and passion for the subject matter, along with their adherence to the highest standards of ethics and integrity, have added value to the classroom dynamic and atmosphere for all.

Congratulations to Kelly!

## Collection Committee Visits Fire Collection at Ingenium in Ottawa

On April 29th, the CFFM Collections Committee spent a wonderful day visiting the splendid fire fighting collection of Ingenium (Canada Science and Technology Museum) in Ottawa. The visit was organized by Committee Chair Chris Terry, who was formerly Ingenium's CEO.

Ingenium staff could not have been more hospitable. We started off by meeting with a team made up of almost all of their senior staff. They were very interested in our plans and



## CFFM Collections Committee Meets

The collections committee, chaired by Chris Terry, a former CEO of the Ingenium Museum, Ottawa, meets at regular intervals to discuss and recommend

accession, deaccession and loan policies to the Museum board. Seen at work are CFFM past chair, Will Lambert; former chair Ken Burgin; current co-chair Michelle Haney-Kileeg; vice chair and collection manager, Janet Waddington; and committee chair, Chris Terry.



This 19th century horse-drawn trolley, from Toronto, was being moved to the new storage facility while we were there. The Museum is in the process of consolidating all of its stored items in the new facility.

made clear their hope that the two institutions would be able to develop closer links as we work to solve our accommodation issues. This could likely involve artefact loans from their very extensive collection. The potential benefit from this relationship cannot be overemphasized.

They also granted us the privilege of a tour through part of their almost complete new collection storage facility where we were shown their impressive line-up of fire trucks. And they topped it off with a visit to their existing storage warehouse in which we found many more treasures including an Amoskeag Steam Pumper which they are deaccessioning. (photo page 2)

The scope and depth of this collection of all aspects of technology in Canada is difficult to comprehend.

The CFFM is fortunate to have established its bona fides with one of Canada's national museum institutions. It will serve us well into the future.

Chris Terry

The Fire Mark is the Newsletter of the Canadian Fire Fighters Museum. Port Hope, Ontario



www.firemuseumcanada.com