

The Fire Mark

The Newsletter of the Canadian Fire Fighters Museum
PORT HOPE, ONTARIO, CANADA • NOVEMBER 2018

Report from the Chairs:

Hello and greetings CFFM members – It is with excitement that Kathy and I introduce ourselves as the new Co Chairs of the Board.

We are both retirees, Port Hope residents and bring many cumulative years of experience on the CFFM Board.

The first order of business is to thank Will Lambert for his leadership, passion and countless hours of volunteerism for the museum the past eight years. He is now the Past Chair and has reached out to us with offers of his time and knowledge, which is appreciated. As Co Chairs, with the privilege of sharing a role, we know the value of Will's offer.

So how do you run a museum with a kick ass collection and committed board but no permanent home? We read our by laws to ascertain our abilities and interviewed friends of the Museum. We held a Board workshop to assess our future, incorporate feedback and evaluate the presenting opportunities. As a result, we have decided to restructure the Board into committees enabling us to expand participation to include community members to glean their skills and networks and maintain momentum. Over the next few months, volunteers will be sought, chairs appointed and terms of reference developed for various committees to keep the dream of a Port Hope CFFM alive. The com-



Above: CFFM Advisory Committee member, Christopher Terry, receives the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers presented by Port Hope Mayor, Bob Sanderson, acting on behalf of Governor General Her Excellency Julie Payette. See below.

mittees will include:

- Collections Committee,
- Site Selection,
- Governance,
- Finance and Audit, and
- Fundraising

All the terms of reference will be ratified by the Board and presented at our AGM in June 2019. If you have an interest or skills in the above committee scopes, please reach out. We're a pleasurable group that enjoys debate, action and goodies at every meeting. Our meetings are held in Port Hope, 7pm on 4th Monday of each month (except December) and we'd love to have you visit. Our emails are listed on the back page.

Sincerely, Co Chairs:
Kathy Kobelski and
Michelle Haney-Kileeg

PS – We hope to see you Nov. 24th at the Port Hope Santa Claus Parade and afterwards for free pictures with Santa.

Our vintage truck will be located at the old Canadian Tire Store at the end of the parade route. Thanks to Walter Hillman and Trade Tech Industries for allowing us the use of his site.

A Prestigious Award

The Canadian Fire Fighters Museum is proud to announce a prestigious award to Advisory Board Member, Christopher Terry of Port Hope. He has received the "Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers." Acting on behalf of Governor General Her Excellency Julie Payette, Port Hope Mayor, Bob Sanderson, presented the prestigious medal for volunteers to

Port Hope resident Christopher Terry at a Municipal Council meeting.

Mayor Sanderson said that he was honoured to perform this task that recognizes a significant contribution of time and expertise to the cause of heritage preservation across Canada.

Mr. Terry's long-standing volunteer work covers a wide range of interests from community theatre to the preservation of Canada's aeronautical heritage and service as an Honorary Colonel in the RCAF. His many contributions were acknowledged by presentations on behalf of the Government of Canada, the Province of Ontario and the Municipality of Port Hope.

Since moving to Port Hope in 2012 he has served on the Advisory Board of the Canadian Fire Fighters Museum and assisted in its efforts to find a new home. His former role as the President and CEO of the Canada Science and Technology Museum Corporation in Ottawa positions him well to provide advice on collections, strategic planning, fundraising and governance issues.

Commenting on the Canadian Fire Fighters Museum he said, "The collection assembled by the Museum is of significant quality and serves to tell the story of the rich history of fire fighting in Canada from its earliest origins until today. It is a story with which everyone living in Canada can identify and celebrate".

Further afield, he supports the aviation heritage movement through work with Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame in Wetaskiwin, Alberta and the Canada Aviation and Space Museum in Ottawa.

The Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers recognizes the exceptional volunteer achievements of Canadians from across the country in a wide range of fields. Any person who is a Canadian citizen and who has made significant, sustained and unpaid contributions to their community in

Canada or abroad is eligible. Candidates must have demonstrated an exemplary commitment through their dedicated volunteerism.



Recognizing Will Lambert

After eight years with the Canadian Firefighters Museum, Will tendered his resignation as Chair of the Board to pursue new and different community work. Will ran a campaign to become Councillor in Ward 1, Port Hope.

Will would have been a tremendous ally to the Museum had he been successful in his run. We hope there is another campaign in Will.

Will wore many hats on the Board including Fire Fighter Liaison, Vice Chair and Co Chair. Come join us for a formal celebration of Will's skills and contributions at our AGM next June. For now we'll have to be content with these highlights:

- Receiving a significant collection from the Fire College in Gravenhurst,
 - Consulting with the Royal Canadian Mint on the design of a commemorative coin,
 - Negotiating tirelessly for a new home for Museum,
- and the new co chairs' favorite:
- Running the "Float Your Fanny Down Ganny" advertising for the Rain Barrel fundraiser!

Stephen King's "Largo"

From July to the end of September film crews and stars descended on our tiny town to film Stephen King's "Largo". This was exciting in itself but the filming also had a CFFM connection!

It all began two years ago, when the adaptation of Stephen King's book IT was filmed in downtown Port Hope. At that time the company rented our 1941 GMC pumper, our most road-worthy fire truck. The original logo on the side of the truck was changed from "Farmer's Mutual" to "Derry Fire Department" for a scene in the movie which was released in theatres in 2017.

Largo is the sequel to IT. It features stars: Bill Skarsgard, Jessica Chastain, James MacAvoy, Sophia Lillis, Finn Wolfhard and Bill Hader who were frequently seen in town throughout the summer. Stephen King himself was here to view segments of the filming.

During September, a large carnival was set up in a local parking lot for a scene in the movie. The crew converted one of the CFFM's Fire Towers to a ticket booth. It was the perfect prop to use as our humble tower was adorned with red, white & blue décor to reflect the film's setting of Derry, Maine (USA). See if you can spot it when the LARGO comes out in September, 2019! More pics on back.

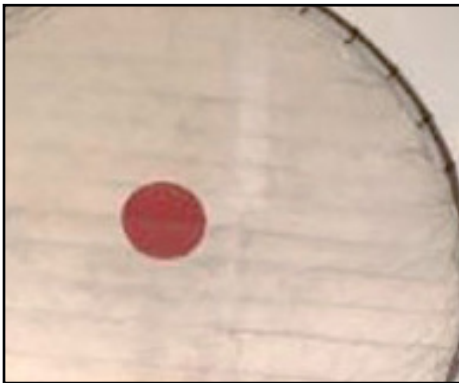


Well, Looked What's Turned Up Now!

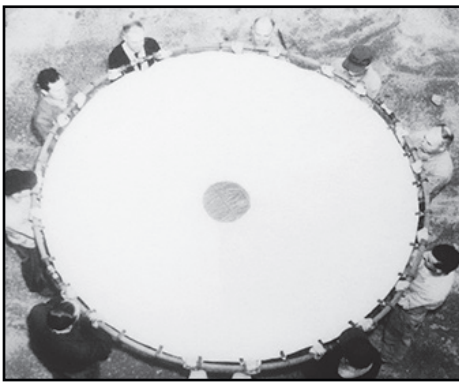
Here is another curiosity from the collections about which we would like to hear from members if they have more information than we do.

Everyone is probably familiar in one way or another with the "Browder Safety Net". This is the rescue tool seen on the walls of almost any historical firefighting display, and the distant target seen by characters on top of tall burning buildings in classic cartoons.

It is made of padded white fabric with a red target circle in the center, attached with springs to a metal rim and held up by many firefighters to safely break the fall of people needing to escape from heights when retreat is otherwise cut off by fire.



Above: Browder net on wall at the Museum.
Below: Browder net in catching mode.



The history of the successes and failures of these nets — from their invention and patenting in 1887 to their abandonment in the 1980s is described at length in many places,



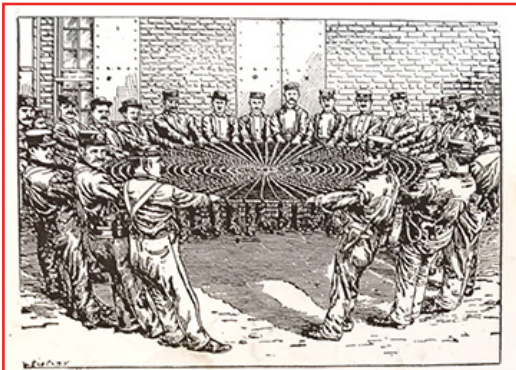
Above: Woody net on floor photographed on the truck bay floor after trucks were removed.
At Right: Woody net description (old text book or training manual or equipment catalogue.)

including probably every fire museum in North America, as well as numerous internet articles and the CFFM's own website at <http://www.firemuseumcanada.com/rescue-equipment/>.

While packing up the CFFM collections for its move into storage pending finding a new physical home, we came across a spider-webby rope contraption that was unfamiliar to us

An initial hypothesis was that this might be part of the CFFM's forest fire fighting gear collection, perhaps a cargo net for helicopters to haul bundles of equipment to the front-line workers at the fire. But then came the fortuitous discovery of a clipping in old CFFM files that shows it to be an early form of rescue net, known as the "Woody Life Saving Net".

This object came to CFFM as part of the collection transferred from the Ontario Fire College, whose records indicate it came to them from the Kitchener Fire Department. Clearly it is old, judging from the uniforms of the 20-plus men holding it in the engraving that illustrates its use, possibly a page out of some old catalogue or textbook. The descrip-



The Woody Life Saving Net.

Filet de Sauvetage "Woody"

The Woody Life saving net is made of the highest grade of Russia bolt rope. Each particular strand is interwoven and firmly sewed together at point of crossing, insuring maximum strength and wearing qualities.

Standard size 10 feet. Weight 35 lbs.

Le filet de sauvetage "Woody" est fabriqué avec la première qualité de cordage de Russie. Chaque cordon respectif est entrelacé et fortement joint l'un à l'autre au point de croisement, assurant ainsi le maximum de force et la qualité d'endurance.

Grandeur régulière 10 pieds. Pesanteur 35 lbs.

tion is bilingual (English/French) so chances are it is Canadian. Nothing more is known of the history of this particular net, nor have we been able to learn anything more of the Woody Life Saving Net in general. The description also indicates a weight of 35 pounds, but ours must have absorbed years of humidity as it feels heavier than that! Still lighter and more compact than a full Browder unit though.

From the lack of information found so far on the internet about the Woody Life Saving Net, it should be safe to assume it was not widely adopted when the alternative was the Browder model. Can you imagine landing feet first and getting snagged in the gaps?

Progress in the Collections.

Now that everything is safely stowed I have turned my attention to updating the accession records. You might be interested in a few statistics.

As things were packed and moved, the accession number and where possible a brief description of each item was noted. Contents lists were affixed to the outside of each box. Then, after each day of packing, the information

was entered into a master packing list, which also includes a brief description of how it was packed (type of container, etc). The types of container include everything from regular file boxes, sturdy Blundtstone shoe cartons from Gould's Shoes (wonderful for helmets and other big lightish things), large and small plastic totes, and yes, fire trucks. Most of the trucks became moving vans. Self-contained items such as cases of breathing gear were not packed, and things that were too awkward to pack were wrapped and tagged. I am now checking the list against the individual collections database records on the museum's computer, updating the records when the hand inventory adds more detail, and noting the temporary storage location. To date of over 2000 items in the packing list more than 1400 records have been updated. There are also categories of artefacts that have not been formally accessioned into the computer database but for which detailed inventories exist, including 52 hydrants, and over 900 patches. Between the packing inventory and the computer database we should have a pretty good idea of where each item is located when the time comes to move the Museum into its new home.

Janet Waddington



Above: Here's another view of our fire tower "ticket booth" on set for Largo. Can you believe that's just an unused food store parking lot?

Want to volunteer? Serve on a committee? We want to hear from YOU.

Contact:

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Below: Our venerable 41 GMC Fire Truck. Just keeps popping up in Hollywood movies!



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