



THE TORRENT

ISSUE 2

THE FORT WAYNE FIREFIGHTERS MUSEUM

FALL 2025

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Welcome to our newsletter

Welcome The Torrent. Our goal is to keep you informed about what is happening at our museum. We will also share ways that you can get involved in everything that happens here. We always welcome so, contact a board member if you have any questions.

Museum Notes

We have been very busy here in the first half of 2025. New signage has been installed, and more firefighting history has been added in addition to Fort Wayne History. All of this have caused us to move some displays around. This also has allowed us to add more displays as donations keep coming in. Our hope is to give our guest a different experience each time they enter our building. A couple of old vehicles have been donated and will soon be on display and allow us to rotate our fleet. It is our hope that someday we will be able to afford to remodel the remaining room in the rear of the building to add to our display area. This will give us the room to have all of our trucks on display all of the time. We have added a new membership option to help raise needed funds. This would be our "Corporate Memberships" for any business or corporation who needs a tax write off and would like to support our museum. There are several different levels to this membership and can be found on our web site under "Memberships". If you know of a business who would like to support us, guide them to our web site or have them contact any of our Board members. We hope this will be a success.

"The role of a firefighter in today's society – be it urban, rural, natural environment, volunteer, career, industrial, defense force, aviation, motor sport, or other is one of dedication, commitment and sacrifice – no matter what country we reside and work in. In the fire service we fight together against one common enemy – fire – no matter what country we come from, what uniform we wear or what language we speak." — Lt JJ Edmondson

Upcoming Events

"Saving Santa"
Sun. December 7, 2025
12:00 – 3:00

Hand pumpers from the beginning.

Early fire pumps were a great improvement over the bucket brigade system of fighting fires. Now instead of throwing water onto a fire from small buckets, hand pumper engines were utilized, pulled to the scene by teams of firefighters. The men would line up along the sides of the pumper and raise and lower the long “brakes” you see running parallel along this engine. The motion would operate the pump, which in turn fed water through a hose. The longest stream of water thrown by this engine was recorded in 1908 as being 219 feet. In subsequent years, steam boilers replaced man power to work pumps, and horses were recruited to pull the now-heavier engines.

In 1834 William Platt and Lysander Button established their engine manufactory at Waterford, Saratoga County, New York on the banks of the Erie Canal. Mr. Platt withdrew from the Company in 1841 and it then became L. Button & Son (for Lysander’s son Theodore). Their Company later became part of the American Fire Engine Company in 1891.

Fort Wayne had 6 hand pumpers used by the volunteers from 1839 – 1882. A Jeffers “Gallery Side Brake” engine, a Button “Side Brake” engine, two small engines, one called a “Garden Sprinkler”, the other unknown. A double Decker, builder unknown, and a Button “Side Brake” (A Squirrel Tail) engine.

One of these hand engines is on display at the Firefighters Museum. This was the “Button “Side Brake” (Squirrel Tail) Engine Built around 1860 by L. Button and Company of Waterford NY. Shipped to Fort Wayne via the Erie Canal, this “side brake” engine, a “squirrel tail” type, so called because the suction hose was carried on top, was possibly used by the Protection Engine and Hose Company No. 5 or bought for the Lafayette Company No. 6 here in Fort Wayne. Was last used by the Rescue Engine & hose Company No. 6, then sold to Convoy Ohio in 1886. It was then re-acquired by local firemen and sold into private hands before the Museum obtained it.



2025 PFFUI Union Convention Open house

On Thursday May 29, the Museum hosted an open house for the delegates of the PFFUI state convention. We were their first stop before heading down to the landing for the big party. Snacks and refreshments were supplied by Local 124 and the delegates picked up their drink ticket for the Landing. We received a lot of great comments on our museum. There were a couple of locals that are looking to start a museum of their own. Lots of questions about how we run ours, how we started, and the process of getting to where we are today. Hope that helps them. We also offered additional help if needed down the road. Most that came in stayed for quite a while before heading on. We also had several stop in during the day and evening on Wednesday. A great time was had by all.



2025 PRE MUSTER MEET & GREET **2025 EMERGENCY!! MUSTER**

On Friday August 22 the Museum hosted a “Meet and Greet” for all of the out-of-town fire truck owners, Sponsors, and Venders who came to town the day before the “Emergency Event” The Event was held the next day, Saturday August 23, in New Haven Our small party, which ran from 6-10, used sponsor money from the Event to have soft drinks and Mission BBQ food. Approximately 30 people attended and had a great time. It was a great way to show off our wonderful Museum.

The “Emergency Event” on Saturday brought in a great crowd. Our Museum had the 1942 IH at the event. It was in the parade and then set up downtown in the antique area where we also sold some of our sales items. The Event had around 100 vehicles, Fire trucks, police vehicles, EMS, and towing. It also had venders showing off their newest vehicles and a Firematic Flea Market with lots of fire items for sale. Our big feature this year was a replica Engine 51 and Squad 51 from the 1970’s TV show Emergency!! The day was a big success raising money for the three charities, New Haven Volunteer Fire, Indiana Burn Camp, and our Museum.



History of Fort Wayne Fire Stations

In this article we will be looking at all of the Fort Wayne Fire Stations in the paid firefighter era, where they were and how long they operated. Other than station 2, the first stations built for horse drawn equipment were first designed in 1892 by Architect Brentwood Tolan, he passed away in 1892 before and building was started. In 1893 the architectural firm of Wing & Mahurin completed the build. Stations 1, 3,4,5, and 6 were built. Stations 7 & 8 were built in 1898 using the same design. The west side of station 3 was added in 1907 and designed by John M. E. Riedel. We will try and spotlight two stations per issue.

STATION 1



Original station 1 built in 1860 replaced in 1893
Court & Berry Torn Down



Second Station 1 built in 1893 replaced in 1971
319 E. Main Street Torn Down



Third Station 1 built in 1972, still active.
419 E. Main Street

Station 2



First Station 2 built in 1885 replaced in 1963
436 E. Wallace Street Torn Down



Second Station 2 built in 1963, still active
2023 Taylor Street

Planned Giving

A HUGE "Thank You" to all of you who are members or have been members of the museum. Your support means everything to us. Without your help we may never have grown to where we are today. In the past we have had former members of the department remember us in their estate after passing. Elmer "Doc" Gamon was the first. His estate gave us a sizable donation that helped get the museum up and running. Later on, Margaret Johnson, the first chief's secretary, set up an account with the Community Foundation to take care of her in her last few years, with the museum receiving the remainder of her estate upon her passing. The museum couldn't have expanded as quickly as we did, had it not been for their generous donations. We thank them and their families.

HELP NEEDED

The Museum is always looking for help. We have several openings on our Board of Directors. We could also use more part time staff. And as always, volunteers to help out with projects and special events. If you would like to help out, contact our Director at the Museum or any of our Board members



Become a museum member

If you are not a member of the museum and want to be one, there are three simple ways to become one.

Active FWFD Firefighters;

1. Go to the FWFD intranet, forms, Union Forms, UN-04 Museum Deduction form. Fill out and return to payroll. (check your pay stub to see if you are a member)

For Retirees and civilians

2. Pick up a membership envelope at the museum, fill out the info, add your money, send back to the museum.

Or

3. Stop by the main branch of the Fire Police City County FCU and get our membership form, fill it out and give to the Credit Union. (It has banking info on it. Do Not bring to us. Leave at Credit Union)

All forms can be picked up at the Museum.

Contact Us

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Visit us on the web at
www.fortwaynefiremuseum.com
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