

In Memory of Those Who Have Gone Before

Firefighters in their dress blues, members of the Benefit Association and the Ladies Auxiliary turned out October 10, 1996 to honor the deceased members of County Fire and recognize the supreme sacrifice of four firefighters who died in the line of duty.

The memorial service was held at the Magna Training Center, where a "Memory Wall" was dedicated to honor these fine men. A photo and a brass plaque were placed on the wall in memory of the four fallen firefighters. All of the firefighters were honored with the reading of their names by Grant Palmer.

Greg Clark conducted the memorial service and Chief Don Berry was a principal speaker. Alene Phinney, daughter of Allen Robinson, and Richard Openshaw, son of Dick Openshaw, also participated in the service honoring their fathers. Dee Putnam and the Utah Scottish Association provided music for the service. All in all, this was a most fitting way to acknowledge "those who have gone before" as County Fire celebrates 75 years of service.

Those Who Died In The Line Of Duty

Allen Robinson - Assistant Chief

Hired December 1, 1936

Died October 14, 1948

October 11, 1948 Al Robinson and Jack Clay were responding to a fire alarm in the chief's car. They were involved in a traffic accident which caused fatal injuries to Al. He died three days later.



John "Jack" W. Clay - Chief

Hired June 1, 1929

Died May 27, 1955

Chief Clay was overcome with smoke fumes on April 3, 1955 at the Soters



Furniture Company fire in Midvale. He was admitted to the hospital early in May for observation and was later released. After two weeks he returned to the hospital where he passed away. Attending physicians reported that the carbon monoxide gas had accumulated over several years.

Thomas L. "Swen" Swenson

Hired Feb. 15, 1949

Died Aug. 18, 1966

Swen collapsed and died of an apparent heart attack Thursday, October 18 at 2:30 pm as he was fighting a grass and brush fire. Battalion Chief Resmussen said he was with Harold Newbold, a fireman, and his son Robert Swenson, a volunteer, when he collapsed.

Leland T. Johnson

Hired June 1, 1958

Died November 19, 1971

Lee Johnson was killed while en route to a fire at 10:35 pm, November 19, 1971. He was riding on the back of fire truck. The truck entered the intersection heading west and was struck broadside by a car coming from the south, causing a rollover. Lee died as a result of head injuries. Because of his death, new and safer helmets were purchased for county firefighters.

In Memory

George W. Papankolos

Hired May 1, 1958 Died May 21, 1995

George was a volunteer and worked out of the Magna Station.

Glen J. Hintze

Hired 1946

Died November 13, 1995

Glen was a volunteer at the Holladay Station. In 1946 he was appointed as a volunteer Lieutenant. The fire truck was housed in Glen's garage until a shed was built on the property of the exiting Holladay Station.

Richard D. Openshaw

Hired July 1, 1959

Retired November 30, 1981

Died January 9, 1996

Dick hired on and worked his way up from firefighter and retired as a Captain, he spent most of his career at Station #2.

Richard W. Shields

Hired July 1, 1959

Died February 16, 1996

Dick joined the department as a volunteer in 1952 at West Jordan Station #8. He joined the department full-time in 1959 and worked his way up the ranks and retired as a Battalion Chief.



Guy Laney

Hired Feb. 6, 1949
Retired June 16, 1971
Died March 21, 1996

He worked his way up the ranks and was a Captain at the time of his retirement.



Samuel C. McGinnis

Hired May 1, 1974
Retired October 1, 1995
Died August 31, 1996

Sam enjoyed his years with the fire department. He retired because of failing health and was a firefighter at the time of his retirement.

A Tribute to All Fireman

A Fireman . . . who may he be?
A husband, a father, a grandfather
or a neighbor of yours or mine.
He is a man . . . strong and true.
His life's ambition is to save me, and you
and those things that we treasure.
He goes along day by day
and takes whatever happens.
For he has the courage,
devotion, and loyalty
for each new danger he must face.
It makes no difference what the fight,
his aim is always to win.
Sometimes our loved ones,
that husband, father, grandfather or neighbor,
our friends do not return . . .
So let us pause for a moment
and pay tribute
to those who have passed away,
some in the line of duty,
some just homeward bound.
We are grateful . . .
our words cannot express
for better people we are
in just knowing . . .
fireman . . .
who care.
Who risk their lives
so we may go on our way,
having a safer life.
So as the calls come through
and the duties follow,
may our Heavenly Father
be guiding you.

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*"We are grateful for the
Salt Lake Firemen!"
Thank You.*

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