

# Fireworld

## 'A Dream Coming to Fruition' The Work Begins

For more than 20 years the main concern for members of the Fire Services National Museum Trust has been to find and secure a home for the continuously growing collection of artefacts, books, records and appliances. Having found the Weedon listed ex-army fort we settled down to what has now been a three year battle for planning permission, funding and a sustainable long term development. With the support of Barclaycard and Cavalry Centre Ltd (the owners of the whole site) we have been through the planning system, a public inquiry and now the final planning details from how to repair the buildings to car parking to the agreed alteration to the junction of the A5 and A45 in the middle of the Weedon village. While it is natural to feel elation at coming to the end of a long road to finding

a 'home' for the collection and having formed the plans for creating "Fireworld" as the public visible face of our museum and public education and entertainment facility, it really is no more than marking the point at which the real work begins. Collating, preserving and recording the collection for posterity and telling the story of the development of Fire Fighting in Britain.

We now start the search to build up the numbers of volunteers to undertake the massive workload which starts now and although it will never be finished we must achieve enough progress to allow us to open to the public in Spring / Summer 2003.

by

**Norman Dickerson**  
(Chairman of the Trust)



*An impressive view. The Museum site being prepared for the long awaited opening in 2003.*

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### Special points of interest:

- *Not Long Now - Opening 2003*
- *T.V. Recognition*
- *It's your Newsletter- Postbag*
- *We need your help!*

## Curators Notes

"Is that the Fire Service Museum?" This question on the telephone can lead to such a variety of queries, that one learns not to be surprised. It may be an offer of an appliance, fire-fighting equipment,



*Trust Curator, Maurice Cole*

assistance with research or in September last year the Wall to Wall television Company making the series 'Salvage Squad' for Channel 4, which featured the restoration of various forms of transport.

The Trust were asked to source suitable appliance, which proved to be our 1938 Bedford of a pattern commercially produced with the coming war in mind. The actors and crew spent a fortnight at

the Weedon workshop, together with Colin Timberlake who has been quietly working on the vehicle's restoration for some, time on the Trust's behalf. Day to day logistic support and part sourcing, was provided by Nick

Baker, Pat Langley and myself with special help from Barry Abbott of Northants Air Compressors.

The NFS aspect of the Museum has been enhanced by the purchase of a 1940 Ford 7V Sulzer Mk3 Heavy Unit from Aberdeen, which has been restored by F.S.P. G. member Peter McCombie. Meanwhile work continues apace at Weedon, where the engineering

team are concentrating on the Series one Landrover from the BP Research Centre and the steamer from Bexhill.

Now that the Museum is moving to fruition more volunteers are sought to assist with the many and varied tasks that now beset us!

Maurice Cole, the Collection Curator, can be contacted at 9 Moreland Way, Manton Heights, Bedford, MK41 7NP. Tel: 01234 355453



*One of the restored appliances outside the Trust's Office*



## Website's Success

This is the URL (web address) of the Museums' web site. It has been around since 1998 but officially went on line in March 1999. The web site was conceived with three aims in mind, first to keep the people of the Fire and Rescue Services in-



<http://fireworld.org.uk>

formed of their Museums progress. Second to advertise the location and some of the future attractions of the museum to the wider world. The third aim is to use the web site as an extension of the museum to show

the exhibits and displays to the people of the world who may not be in a position to visit it in person. When

the museum opens the web site will play a vital roll keeping every one up to date with the latest exhibitions and events taking place, along with news of new acquisitions of important artefacts. So bookmark the URL and visit it often.



*Website Manager - Derrol Hopewell*

## Voluntary Work

As you can see in this photograph the collection consists not only of Fire Appliances but many smaller items. These artifacts needed sorting, labeling and recording. The Friends are working to this end. As Norman Dickerson, the Chairman of the Trust states in this News sheet a great deal of work has happened. Others have held us back, but our enthusiasm and determination

remains true and undaunted.



*Part of the vast collection in storage*

As you can see from the Chairman of the Trustees report inside the pages of this News sheet, the Museum is now taking shape and providing working parties with considerable work in ensuring when it opens its doors for the first time next year, it is an exciting place to visit for enthusiasts and general members of the public alike.

# A Time Consuming Task?

During the year 1999/2000 Alan Youngman and myself started to 'sort out' the 80 plus containers which were full to the brim with various items of equipment collected by the Trust over the past 20 years. As a keen Fire Service enthusiast and local historian, it was like opening up an Aladdin's Cave, from brass branches, foam equipment, helmets, B.A. sets etc. spanning decades of the service, there were thousands of items. It took us a year to basically sort out all of the items into separate containers in readiness for the painstaking process of cataloguing. The Trustees had spend many hours researching and discussing the best way forward and it was decided a Museum Service approved computer programme be purchased and recognised training be given to the staff who would carry out this task. The 'Modes' sys-

tem was purchased and we attended a documentation course at Grantham, run by East Midlands Museum Service. All set to go?

### The correct information?

All items have now got to be documented using the forms developed and given an appropriate entry number. If it is agreed to retain the item it is then given a unique accession number and year code. Then its history to date needs to be established, whether gifted or loaned, where it came from, where it was used and exactly where it will be stored until it is displayed in the Museum. All of the equipment is specially and discretely marked using varnishes and markers so that it can be easily traced in the future.



Malcolm (Me Duck?) Towey in action

Once the forms are completed they are passed to Tony Barrett who is entering the data onto the 'Modes' system, which provides the museum records. We are also in the process of trying to obtain a digital camera so that the items can be photographed at the time of accessioning and then electronic images can be stored on the computer for easier recognition and research purposes. This process will take us a number of years and will still be going on when the museum is open.



Entering data the Tony Barrett way !!

## Postbag



### "Two Six"

Hello - We're the Fire Services National Museum Trust. Oh! You've heard of us. Ah! but have you heard of 'Fireworld'? You certainly will do from now on! My task is to stir up your interest - nay enthusiasm, for this, which has been in the development for over 20 years. It is almost there and we want you to lend your support in this final effort. How do you

*".....lend your support in this final effort."*

think we who served in the Royal Air Force made a major contribution to winning the Second World War. Well, the secret was, when a final attempt was needed to achieve physically what seemed impossible the order....TWO - SIX was given to all ranks within earshot, to be obeyed instantly and with a spurt of energy. The objective being invariably achieved. All we want you to do is contact us now. Give us your views

on the project. Ask those searching questions on anything connected with our premises, appliances, equipment. Better still, tell us, lend us or give us (we aren't proud). Show us you are with us. Do it NOW!!, as the Inland Revenue tell us from Craggy Island. I feel like the bewildered army recruit who shouted desperately from the squad as a sergeant, who had suddenly lost his voice, was marching towards the edge of a cliff. 'For heaven's sake, say something to me - even if it's only Goodbye!

*By Reg Haley*

## Fire Conference 2002

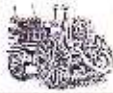
This next year in September 2002, Fire Conference is to be held in London in the Docklands at a highly prestigious Conference venue. We have been asked to provide a very high profile exhibition unit to highlight the Museum. It is to be in the main entrance and will be a focal point of the entire Fire Exhibition. We will be putting a

restored Fire Appliance on show, together with one awaiting restoration. 'Friends' will be manning the exhibition unit throughout the three days, when it is expected that thousands of National and International visitors will come through the doors. 2002 is the year of I.I.M. The Queen's Jubilee and hopefully the restored appliance will date to the beginning of Her Reign. Needless to say this is a major contribution to raising awareness of the Museum

and one we will be grasping properly.



Appliance awaiting a final polish for display



## Fire Services National Museum Trust

Fireworld Headquarters  
The Old Depot  
Bridge Street  
Weedon  
Northants  
NN7 4PS

Phone / Fax: 01227 342396

**The National Museum of  
Firefighting**

**We're on the Web!**  
<http://fireworld.org.uk>

# MISSION STATEMENT

**"To establish a Museum of National importance and status relating to Fire Brigade and Firefighting and the dangers from fire"**



Outside "Fireworld" Headquarters. L to R: Maurice Cole, David Stevens (BFS), Winston Osborne, Norman Dickerson (Chairman), Tony Barrett, John Crawley, Neil Wallington, Reg Haley & Steve Smith.

## Friends' Update

Bad news first – John Herrick who has been Chairman of the Friends throughout the period covering finding the site at "Weedon" and the whole planning process has resigned to concentrate his retirement efforts on his charity work in his home county, Lincolnshire. John has carried us through a difficult period of being homeless and our thanks to him. Good News – with progress on site now is the opportunity to refocus the "Friends" at Weedon.

The Friends new address is :

The Friends Office  
Fireworld Headquarters  
The Old Depot  
Bridge Street  
Weedon  
Northamptonshire  
NN7 4PS

A new funding package has to be put together for "Saved" magazine but in the meantime the Friends will be circulating the Trust's Newsletter to keep members informed (and you can visit

the website). While the Friends are being restructured to sit the new requirements at Weedon the Trust has agreed to oversee the planning and meetings required. Meetings in future will be at Weedon.

### Call To Action

Now is the time for all established 'Friends' and new 'Friends' to consider how we help the Museum rapidly become a major force in education, fun and spectacle for all to enjoy. We will need to provide continuing practical support in working parties, of course. But we also need to have particular regard for other types of support, for example, staffing of exhibits, consideration to marketing, the opening



*Waiting for the bells!*

of a shop, administration and clerical duties, which obviously at least to start with we will want to provide in order to minimize the financial burden of such an exciting enterprise. Skilled or not – fire brigade experience or not – man or woman – please contact us. So the plea in this forward is for more members, and more individuals to help in a very positive way throughout the next months as we work to open our doors to the public. The closer the opening of the Museum, the greater the excitement. I would like to see you there taking an active part. For your membership fee you will get little to start with other than these newssheets. When the Museum opens, however, you will get special events as they occur from time to time, plus discount on sales goods. Other advantages may be available as we progress over the next few months. One thing is certain without 'Friends' this whole project is made much more difficult. So if you really believe in the establishment of a National Museum of Fire Fighting, join in and encourage others too.

