



HALL OF FLAME

NEWSLETTER



@hallofflamemuseum



Hall of Flame Museum of Firefighting



@Hall_Museum

WHO WE ARE:

In 1961 the collection was large enough for exhibit in a small museum in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, near the Getz summer home.

A few years later, the Hall of Flame moved to Kenosha, Wisconsin, where it remained until 1970. In that year the Getz family moved to Scottsdale, Arizona, and Mr. Getz decided to move the Hall of Flame as well.

In 1974 the Hall of Flame opened its present building in Phoenix's Papago Park, adjacent to the Phoenix Zoo and Phoenix Municipal Stadium.

The Hall has grown from its original single gallery to five exhibit galleries, the National Firefighting Hall of Heroes, the museum store, a theater, a restoration shop, a collection storage building, and administrative offices.

The Hall's present size is 70,000 square feet, with 35,000 square feet of exhibit galleries. The collection has grown to over 130 wheeled pieces and thousands of smaller artifacts.

Article Highlights

Honor 365

Downers Grove
"Twins"

1st Breathing Device

Smoke Article

1957 Van Pelt
Pumper

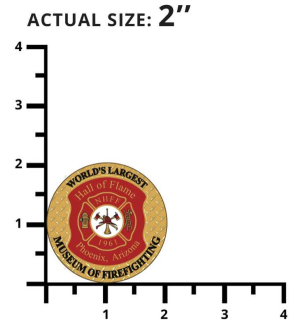
Ralph Glasmann
Feature

Don Hale

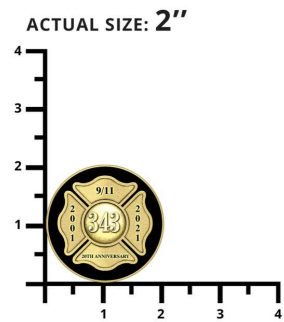
66 New Arrivals

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Hall Of Flame 60th Anniversary Coin



FDNY 9/11 20th Anniversary Coin



Anniversary Puppy Shirt



HONOR 365



The Hall of Flame Museum of Firefighting was proud to be the Phoenix-area host this past April for a traveling exhibit devoted to the World Trade Center and sponsored by veteran and first responder support service Honor365.



The exhibit is a large, detailed model of the Twin Towers as they appeared in lower Manhattan before the devastating terrorist attacks; a reminder of what was lost on 9/11, depicted here inspiringly intact. Around the base of the model are listed the names of all those who died in the Twin Towers during the 9/11 attacks, first responders and civilians alike, as well as the names of the six fatalities in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. The model is the four-year project of a young artist and firefighter-in-training from Deurne, The Netherlands named Daan Van der Steijn.

Inspired by a television documentary on the attacks, Daan began work on his model at the age of 14 and completed it when he was 19. Daan comes from a firefighting family and is now in training to join the Deurne Fire Department. His World Trade Center project came to the attention of Honor365, a Utah-based organization founded in 2017 with the mission of ending suicide among veterans and first responders by providing referrals and services for therapy, education and training.



As part of a U.S. tour ending in New York for the 20th anniversary of the attacks, the exhibit occupied Gallery 3 at the Hall of Flame from March 27 until May 2. It opened with a gala evening reception at the Museum on Saturday, March 27 and closed with a one hour “Honor Walk” ceremony at 11 a.m. Saturday, May 2 to pay tribute to the 9/11 fallen and to local community heroes.

After departing the Hall of Flame, the exhibit moved on from Phoenix to continue its national tour in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The tour continues through the Midwest, Texas, and the south, with stops in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, crash site of United Flight 93 on 9/11, and the Pentagon, outside Washington, D.C., also attacked from the air on that date.

The tour is scheduled to conclude in New York City on September 11, 2021, the 20th anniversary of the attacks.

Nose to nose they face each other, along the north wall of Gallery II at the Hall of Flame. We sometimes think of them as “The Twins,” but they were built a year apart, and they didn’t meet for more than twenty years after that. And in any case, they would have been fraternal twins, not identical.

We’re referring to the two handsome late ‘20s era fire trucks, both built by Seagrave, and both of which served the city of Downers Grove, Illinois. But while the family resemblance is clear at the front ends, from the cabs back these trucks served different functions.

Founded in Detroit, Michigan in 1881, Seagrave Fire Apparatus lays claim to the title of the oldest manufacturer of firefighting equipment in the United States. Ten years later the company relocated to Columbus, Ohio, and it was there that, in 1927, they built a pumper for Downers Grove, a suburb to the southwest of Chicago. This “Standard” model carried a centrifugal pump capable of delivering 750 gallons per minute. This style of pump was pioneered by Seagrave, and by the 1940s had largely replaced the older style rotary and piston pumps on American fire engines.

A year later, in 1928, Seagrave built a city service ladder truck for the fire department of Urbana, Illinois. The Seagrave company had actually begun, in the late 1800s, as a maker of ladders for cherry orchards in Michigan, and this expertise was carried on with the finely-crafted ladders on this truck. Over the course of her career, the rig acquired searchlights, extinguishers and other equipment. The ladder crews who rode on trucks of this sort handled rescues and salvage work, while the pumpers worked to put out the fire.



THE
"TWINS"

In 1950 the Urbana department sold the ladder truck to Downers Grove, putting it in the same department as the 1927 pumper. Eventually, both rigs came to spend their retirement together at the Hall of Flame, in company with many other Seagraves, like a 1907 Seagrave hose wagon from Petoskey, Michigan in Gallery I; a 1921 Seagrave pumper in Gallery II that was one of the earliest fire trucks purchased by the Phoenix, Arizona fire department, and a 1938 Seagrave "Junior" Aerial from Staunton, Virginia, still proudly wearing her original paint!

Downers

— Grove —

"Twins"



1st Breathing Device

This April saw the unveiling of a new exhibit here at the Hall of Flame, devoted to a pioneering invention in the history of breathing apparatus for firefighters and other emergency workers. Now at the south end of the Hall of Heroes, near the rear entrance to the Hall of Flame's video theater, is a specimen of the Firefighter's Breathing Device designed by American inventor **Garrett Augustus Morgan** (1877-1963).

The hood had long been on display in Gallery IV, but was hung in a high position on the wall where visitors could easily fail to notice it, and with no explanatory signage. The new display, with research and text by Sharon Moore, design and installation by veteran museum preparator Gregory Simoncic of Attick Studios and construction by Pat Schuller, more properly presents the piece and explains its historical importance.



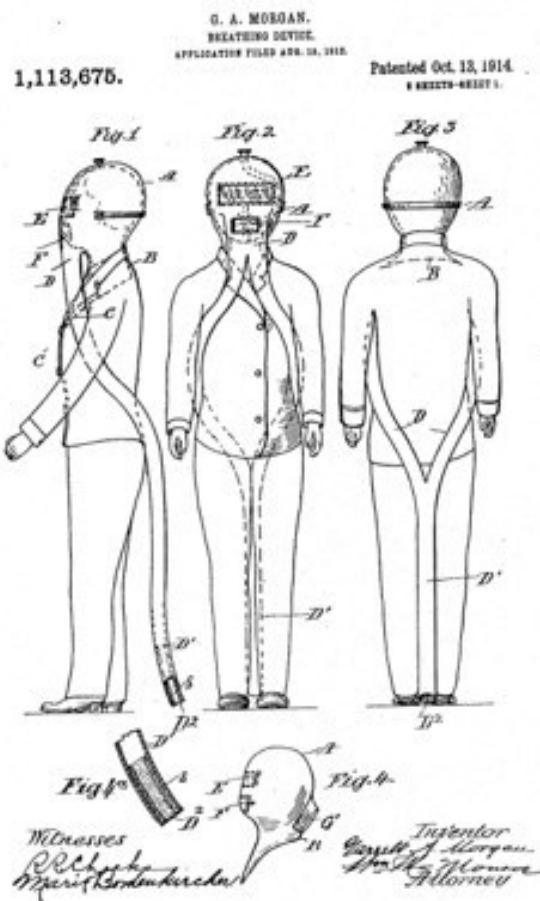
Garrett Morgan



A native of Paris, Kentucky, Garrett Morgan was of American Indian, European and African descent. Largely self-educated, Morgan received numerous patents for his inventions, which included the three-stage traffic signal and a variety of successful hair care products. But his significance in the history of the fire service began in March of 1911.

Morgan was inspired by the horrific Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire in New York on March 25 of that year. The fire killed 146 workers in the garment factory, most of them immigrants who had been locked into the workplace. Understanding that the leading cause of death and injury in most fires is smoke inhalation rather than burning, Morgan intended his device to "enable a firefighter to enter a burning building filled with thick suffocating gases and smoke and to breathe freely for some time therein, and thereby enable him to perform his duties of saving life and valuables without danger to himself from suffocation."

The hood flaps rested on the shoulders, tucked under the coat, preventing smoke and poisonous gasses from entering the hood. Fresh air was drawn into the end of the hose at floor level, through a moist sponge (the sponge is not present in our display). The mica windows allowed the user to see, and the rectangular flap at the mouth could be moved to the side to allow quick bursts of fresh air whenever the wearer was not in the smoke-filled area. A hole at the top of the hood could be plugged while in the smoky environment, and quickly unplugged once out in fresh air. The device was originally intended for firefighters, but could also be used by engineers, chemists and other professionals who worked around hazardous fumes or dust.

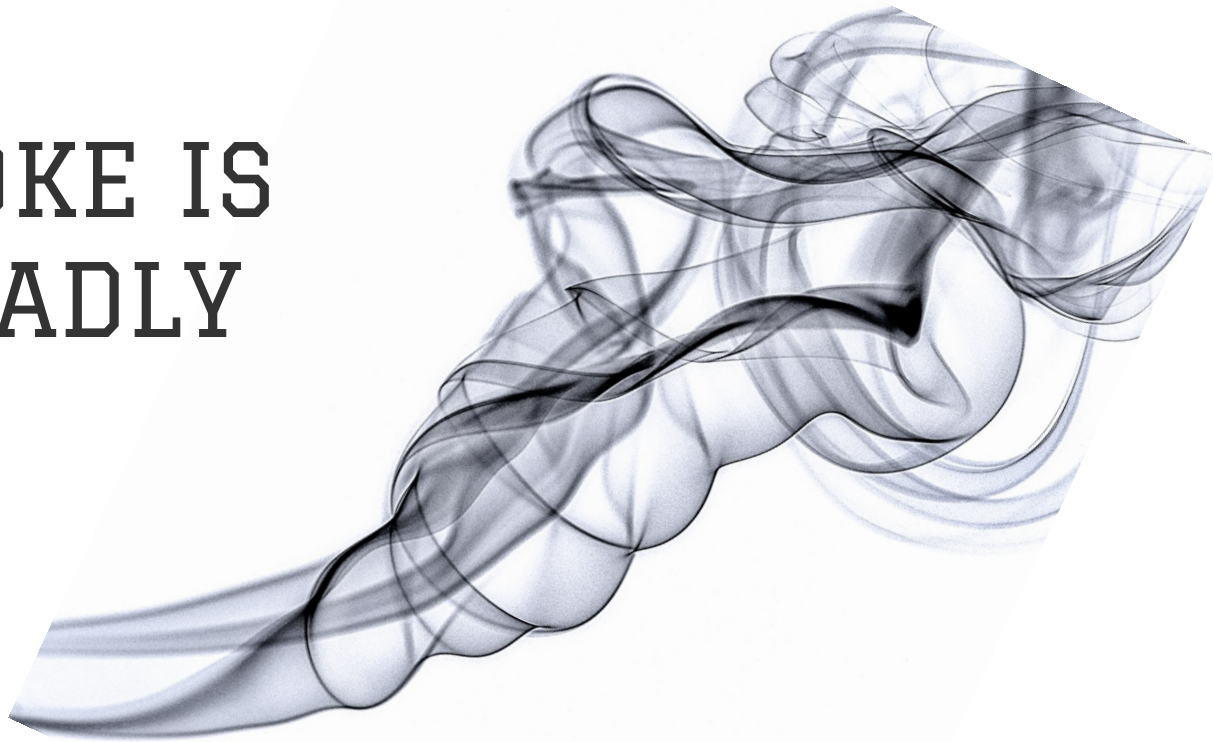


As a person of color, Morgan encountered resistance in marketing his life-saving invention. In an effort to counteract this, Morgan used a white male actor in his advertising to suggest that a white man was the inventor of the device, while Morgan himself would appear, in live presentations, costumed as an American Indian called "Big Chief Mason" to assist in demonstrating the device. As a result of this and other marketing strategies that distanced the inventor from his racial identity, Morgan was able to sell his Safety Hood to over 500 cities as well as the U.S. Navy and Army. The breathing hoods also showed their utility in Ohio in 1916, when Morgan and his brother successfully used them to extract the victims of a cave-in in a tunnel beneath Lake Erie, after several earlier rescue attempts had failed.

Later in his life, Morgan experimented with a cigarette equipped with a water-filled pellet to insure it would put itself out; the idea didn't catch on, but it's notable that Morgan never gave up trying to innovate fire safety.



SMOKE IS DEADLY



There are more than one million house fires in the United States each year, causing more than 2,500 deaths annually. Most of these deaths are caused by smoke inhalation. When you inhale smoke from a fire, you are breathing a super-heated combination of unburned fuels and toxic gases such as carbon monoxide and cyanide. These toxic gases prevent the body from absorbing oxygen, which can cause death or irreversible harm. Death can also be caused by inhaling super heated air, which damages the lungs.

In a structure fire, hot smoke and toxic gases rise to the ceiling and fill a room from the top down, while cooler, cleaner air is found at the floor. Hot air rises because air molecules have more energy to move around, so they take up a greater physical space. As this warm air expands, it becomes less dense and rises above the cooler, cleaner air below.

A firefighter inside a burning building is forced to work and breathe in a smoke-filled environment. Garrett Morgan understood this when he patented his invention in 1914.

1952

Van Pelt



Having spent the 2020 holiday season on display at the Phoenix Zoo as part of the ZooLights festivities, the Hall of Flame Museum's beautiful 1952 Van Pelt "squirrel" pumper is off on another adventure. This time the rig is headed to a notable Arizona zoological park on the west side of the Valley: The Wildlife World Zoo, Aquarium and Safari Park in Litchfield Park.

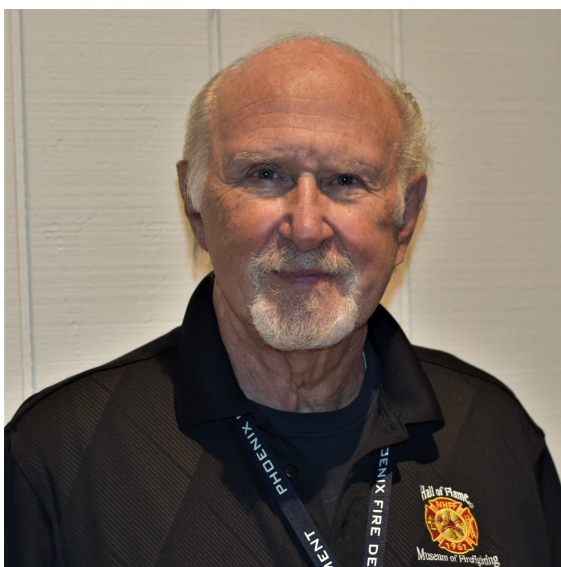
The truck currently resides near the entrance to the park, where she has already shown herself to be a popular photo op with zoo-goers.

"The fire truck on display has been a huge hit with our visitors here at Wildlife World!" says Kristy Morcom, Director of Media Relations at the Zoo. "We have all really enjoyed our partnership with Hall of Flame and it's been fun watching younger generations get so excited about such an important part of Arizona history!"

The Van Pelt served in different departments in northern Arizona, starting with the Flagstaff department and later, in 1980, being purchased by the joint department of the communities of Fernwood and Timberline, now served by the Summit Fire Department. It was during her tenure with Fernwood/Timberline that she acquired her trademark, the cheerful firefighting squirrel on the door. Perhaps this nod to the animal kingdom especially suits the rig for residency in a zoo.

Started in 1973 as a private breeding facility by Mickey Ollson, Wildlife World Zoo opened to the public in 1984 and has steadily expanded ever since. It now includes not only a world-class collection of animals but an aquarium with both salt water and fresh water species, a safari park and, for cuteness overload, a baby animal nursery. There are also gift shops, of course, as well as restaurants and a few rides. The engineer of the train ride even gives the Hall of Flame a shout-out as he passes the Van Pelt.

Ralph Glasmann



The volunteers at the Hall of Flame Museum of Firefighting all have fascinating stories to tell, but not many of them can claim to have performed on a USO tour, and later been both the referee and medical staff for martial arts tournaments all over the country, among many other adventures. Ralph Glasmann can, however.

Currently serving as the Hall of Flame's Volunteer Captain, and at 78 one of our more senior volunteers, Ralph hails from Denver, Colorado. He attended Doane College (now Doane University) a liberal arts college in Crete, Nebraska, majoring in Vocal Music. With the Doane chorus, he went on a USO tour in 1966.

"We followed Bob Hope around," Ralph recalls.

He decided not to pursue music as a career, however. Somewhere in there, a new fire station opened near his home in Denver, and Ralph and his father took a walk over and toured the place at an open house. "While I was there, the guys kept saying to me 'why don't you become a fireman?'" Ralph tells it. "They gave me the job more or less on the spot, I think because I was tall."

It was a different time in firefighting. "I had to buy my own uniforms and turnouts," says Ralph. "We didn't have EMS yet; we had an instructor card for first aid. We'd go to a car accident and pull the victim out and say 'Hang on buddy, the ambulance will be here in a few minutes.'" (He later became an EMT.)

He worked for Denver FD for a little over three years before taking a full-time position with United Airlines, working in Customer Service and Operations. This career eventually took him to San Francisco, where at one point he supervised a staff of 1250 people.

"You just do your job
and help the people"

Ralph Glasmann

Hall Of Flame's Volunteer Captain

Alongside all of this, Ralph had a lifelong interest in martial arts. “When I was in junior high one of my friends’ Dad was a [martial arts] teacher,” he says. “He’d teach us in the backyard.” He eventually became a student of the Okinawan discipline Ryu-Te (“Defensive Hands”). He frequently travels the country to work as a ref at tournaments.

Ralph and wife Nancy relocated from San Francisco to the Valley in the ‘80s. Asked why, he answers with a single word: “Weather.” Soon after, he visited the Hall of Flame and became, along with Ron Deutsch, Joe Bakas and Richard Stuve, one of the Museum’s earliest volunteers.

He also teaches EMT at Paradise Valley Community College, and has worked, for twenty years, for Phoenix Fire Department, as a “crisis interventionist,” providing support to people who have suffered a loss or sudden hardship.



In that capacity he’s responded to homicides, suicides, domestic violence, fires, SWAT team situations and other harrowing incidents, coming to the aid of people in the wake of such tragedies.

It’s challenging work, but Ralph says he finds it gratifying. With characteristic mild understatement, he says “You just do your job and help the people, and then move on to the next.”

Don Hale

1921 - 2016



The month of July marks the one hundredth birthday of one of the most important people in the history of the Hall of Flame Museum of Firefighting. Don Hale passed on a few years ago, but his legacy lives on in the museum's collection.

From 1980 to 2011, Don Hale was the Hall of Flame's Restorer. Don came to the Museum after a thirty-year career with the fire department of San Luis Obispo, California.

He learned his restoration skills when he apprenticed under his grandfather, who created replicas of stages, wagons and carriages for the movie studios of Hollywood during the 1930s. Many of the skills he acquired, which included carriage painting, gold leaf scrolling, lettering and striping, mechanical work, upholstery, wheelwrighting, finish carpentry and bodywork, were already becoming rare even during that period.

To some degree or other, Don restored about ninety per cent of the large pieces on exhibit in our galleries, bringing many of them back from complete disrepair to beauty and functionality. He was both a master craftsman and a true artist who took great pride in his work; you can see his signature adorning many of the pieces on display on our floor.

But the Hall of Flame was only one chapter in his long and astonishing life, which included Army service in New Guinea in World War II and on the nuclear proving grounds in Nevada, designing custom speedboats, and other adventures too numerous to mention. He passed in 2016, at the age of 94. He was a one-of-a-kind, hilarious person, and we miss him daily. It's often said that no one is irreplaceable; Don was pretty close.



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