

NATIONAL FIRE HERITAGE CENTER



Annual Report | 2021–2022



Preserving
the Perishable



From the President

Puzzling is an activity that has you re-create an image from many pieces, often 500 or more. This activity reached a new level of popularity during the pandemic lockdown. Puzzling is a meditative activity that helps you concentrate and focus on the task at hand. You can do it alone or with any number of other people.

The National Fire Heritage Center (NFHC) really is like a big jigsaw puzzle. For anyone who has worked on jigsaw puzzles, there are several successful strategies to achieve completion of the big picture. Many like to start by putting together all the outer edge pieces first, starting with the corner pieces.

The corner pieces of the NFHC puzzle are “Heritage Hall,” the strategic vision of the NFHC along with our mission, vision, and values. Our organizational structure with established roles, rules, and responsibilities also help to establish and frame the edges of our organizational puzzle.

With the basic organizational framework established, we can then start filling in the middle of the puzzle, accomplished by grouping remaining puzzle pieces according to color, texture, and form, while at the same time watching for developing patterns and interlocking pieces.

For the NFHC, these groups of pieces are categorized as: the NFHC Archive/Library (hard copy and digital), Funding for operations and our endowment, Programs that increase visibility of the NFHC and recognize each contributor to the fire protection and fire service industry, and People, all the folks and organizations that have cheered us onward. The 2021-2022 NFHC Annual Report will spotlight these 4 areas of interest as we piece the NFHC together.

The NFHC puzzle is far from being completed. But a general picture of what it can be, an online resource of historical fire service and fire protection disciplines, is emerging from the pile of puzzle pieces we have to work with. I am ever so confident that our mission, with the help of all the folks sitting around our puzzle, can form a complete picture one day. Because, even the hardest, most complicated puzzles have a solution!

All the Best,

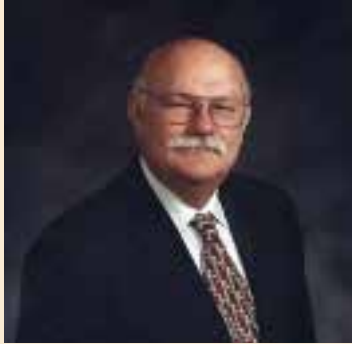
Rodney Slaughter, President/CEO
National Fire Heritage Center
Emmitsburg, Maryland
president@fireheritageusa.org



What is Historic?

For people wanting to donate material or their personal library, this is a question that is asked most frequently of the NFHC. Technically, historic documents are documents that contain important information about a person, place, object, or event.

In a conversation with Ronny Coleman, NFHC President Emeritus, he explains what he considers “historic.” President Coleman emphasizes any “original thoughts or ideas that has been duly



recorded, the rarity of that document (how widely distributed it is), and the uniqueness of the document (the events described, or ideas presented).”

Historical documents, are also known as primary sources

which were produced around the time of the events and provide direct or firsthand evidence about an object, event, person, or work of art.

First-hand accounts of the development of the steam fire engine, filled with intrigue, sabotage, and ingenuity for example are fascinating to study. The first-hand account in the formation of a volunteer fire department would be another example as well as the logbooks of fire departments around the country. Photo documentation of events, places,



and people that support the written record also fall into the “historic” category.

Of the many documents that the NFHC has in our collection, a percentage are truly “historic.” President Coleman offers some additional examples such as the documents and reports that went into the final publication of “America Burning” or the source documents used in the “Wingspread” reports. These documents reflect what the creators observed and/or believed about the event or issues being studied and the solutions being proposed.

Many documents that are produced today, such as personal letters, pictures, video’s, contracts, newspapers, medical records, training materials, meeting minutes, etc. would also be considered valuable historical documents in the future!

We have learned that many of these historical records and documents will be lost to the future, either by not recognizing their significance and thrown away, or since they are either printed on ordinary paper, which has a limited lifespan, or stored in digital formats that can become obsolete rather quickly.

This eventuality is why the mission of the NFHC is so important. For many students, writers, researchers, and academics, access to historic documentation is useful to illuminate the present and confront our future by consulting our past! 🌀

National Fire Heritage Center’s oldest historic asset—A Dutch newspaper from 1684



Archives



There is no argument that the most important piece of the NFHC and the largest focus of our efforts is the NFHC archive/library, which grows exponentially every year with donations from those who are retiring or who have passed away.

In addition to other wonderful donations this year, we have received the personal libraries of two fire service instructors and occupational safety pioneers Bob Barraclough and James Jaracz. Once cataloged and digitized these collections will be searchable on-line along with the 15,000 to 16,000 pieces of already cataloged materials.

But first! There is another 20,000 pieces of material that needs to be cataloged and scanned into digital files. Clearly, the number of people currently volunteering for the NFHC needs to scale-up quickly to handle the volume of material to be digitized and posted online.

In fact, the NFHC is starting a campaign asking every fire department, historical society, fire

museum, engineering associations, as well as, interested individuals, to look toward your own archives and libraries for those documents you would like to have preserved for the future. Just scan the document(s), provide a description of what it is all about and send the NFHC your digital files, keeping the originals for yourself. Please keep in mind copyright laws. This campaign can easily link historical information around the country and build out our archive/library very quickly.

<https://fireheritageusa.catalogaccess.com/>

With limited storage space, we are redoubling our efforts to reduce our footprint in the Vigilant Hose Company's Activity Building on Creamery Road in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Digitizing the collection of resources helps us achieve this goal and adds significant value to the contents of the archive/library as a definitive online research resource. 🌀



Executive Director/Archivist
Dick DeVore





Financials

The funding pieces have been one of the most difficult to identify and fit together. However, this past year our revenue exceeded our expenses. By being good stewards of the funds, we have managed to keep the NFHC operation going. That being said, we should be operating at a much higher budget level.

A rough back of the envelop calculation reveals that our current storage (compressed for air space) of 6,000 cubic feet of books, magazines, and pamphlets, multiplied by annual cost of \$600 per cubic feet, would equate to an annual budget of \$3,600,000 for archive/library storage and preservation.

Similarly, when asked to define the in-kind contributions for a grant application, a calculation of \$241,738.52 in donated volunteer time, benefits, materials and overhead (donated rent and utilities) for a year is a conservative estimate. Even though we are operating on volunteer labor and services, the expense for these services and considerations are obviously are going up!

Collectively, the NFHC should be operating with a budget of \$3,841,740 annually. Like 90% of most

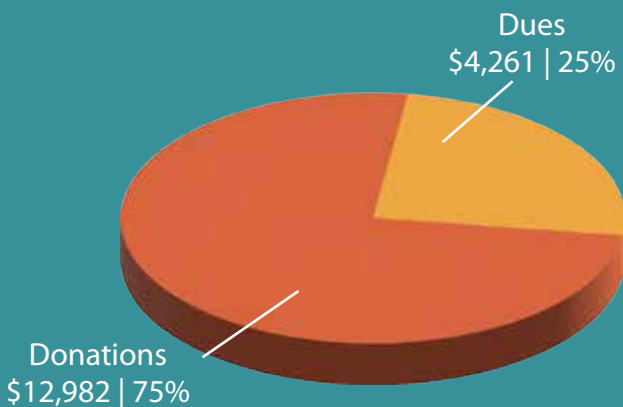
non-profits operating under \$1 million annually, we are operating on a very thin margin of existence. But still, we persist! What we have collected recently includes:

- ◆ The \$10,000 challenge- Tony Apfelbeck made this donation to the NFHC reserve fund with a challenge of matching it. In 2021, the board responded by raising \$2,982 with an additional \$10,000 for 2022 so far (\$2,500 Bill Killen, \$2,500 Lynn and David White and \$5,000 Rodney Slaughter).
- ◆ NFHC supporters (members) and allied disciplines provided an additional \$4,261 to the operating budget. If you believe in preserving the history and traditions of the American fire service, you too can join our efforts by making donations at <https://fireheritageusa.org/donate>.

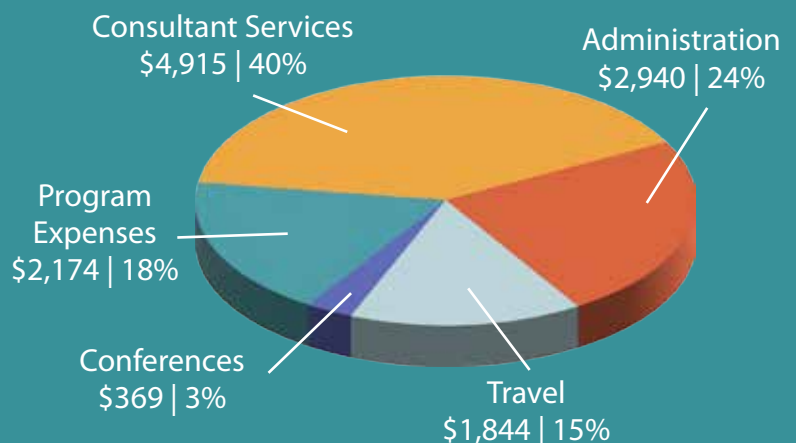
Of course, we need a massive infusion of cash to even consider our Moonshot—to have a building of our own! Roughly \$500,000 to 1,000,000 for a building that allows climate control and room for expansion of the Library/Archive. 🌀

<https://fireheritageusa.org/donate>

2021 Revenue Sources \$17,243



2021 Expense Sources \$12,242





Programs



In the center of our puzzle we have existing programs, such as the Hall of Legends, Legacies, and Leaders (HLLL), and the Ben Franklin Writers Award (BFWA), to which we are adding in 2022 an Oral Fire History Program (OFHP). Seed funding from the Delaplaine family foundation, will jump start the Oral History Program and help the NFHC fulfill our mission to preserve our oral traditions as well as add content to the on-line archive/library.

These pieces of the NFHC puzzle provide historical recognition of individual contributions to the fire protection and fire service industry, along with an awareness of the mission for the NFHC. Further outreach is necessary to improve both funding and grow the digital content of the collection. 🌀



NFHC on-line store is a great resource for gifts to those who are collectors and dedicated to the history and traditions of the American fire protection and fire service fields.

Proceeds from the store support the operation and function of the National Fire Heritage Center.



VISIT US AT:

FIREHERITAGEUSA/STORE

EXECUTIVE BOARD

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Don Bathurst, Vice President Finance/CFO
Grayson Hofferber, Treasurer
Stu Nathan, Secretary

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Personnel

At the National Fire Heritage Center (NFHC) we are puzzling together with a dedicated group of volunteers and organizational partners. Examples include: Mike Weider, Executive Director of IFSTA; and Linda Wells, NFPA Librarian, who serve on our board of directors—both of whom are extremely valuable in providing direction for our own archives/library. Also, Dr. Carey Waddell, Chair of the Ben Franklin Writers Award; and Greg Noll, who serves as Chair of the Hall of Legends, Legacies, and Leaders, provide program direction and continuity. Similarly, each of our Board Members and Trustees serve as subject matter experts and are involved in a wide range of disciplines and NFHC activities.

The most recognizable part of the NFHC puzzle is the names and number of people who volunteer to serve on our Board of Directors, Board of Trustees, Committee Chairpersons, advisors, and supporters.

Our organizational affiliations at the national level include the International Fire Service Training Association (IFSTA), and the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF). Completing the NFHC puzzle at the mission and purpose level are the Fire Museum Network (FMN), the International Fire Buff Associates (IFBA), and the Society for the Preservation and Appreciation of Antique Motor Fire Apparatus in America (SPAAMFAA). At the operational level, Bobby Halton, Editor and Chief of Fire Engineering Magazine, provides the NFHC with a display booth and recognition of the HLLL at the opening ceremonies of FDIC. All of these organizational affiliations serve as important touchstones to the mission of the NFHC.

At the same time, the NFHC Collaborative Ventures Committee, is exploring cooperative agreements with other organizations with similar missions and resources for help with building our archive/library by combining resources and/or reducing duplicative efforts. 🌀

New Treasurer, Grayson Hofferber



In April 2022, the NFHC Board of Directors unanimously voted Grayson Hofferber to the position of NFHC Treasurer. Former Treasurer, Paul Brooks, has stepped down after a number of years guiding the organization's finances to the point of positive cash flow.

Recently voted into the Boulder Valley's cadre of 40 under 40, Grayson was recognized as one of 40 emerging business leaders in his community. Grayson is founder and president of Millennial Wealth Management, a fee-only registered investment advisor serving clients of the millennial generation in the Boulder and Denver areas, he's been in the financial services industry for 11 years.

Grayson also founded Millennial Bookkeeping, which works in concert with his financial planning business. He chairs the Broomfield Chamber of Commerce and ran for city council in 2021. He is the founding member of H.Y.P.E., Helping Young Professionals Evolve a networking and personal development group for young professionals in the Broomfield area.

Grayson lives in Broomfield with his wife and three children and is very active in the community. Hofferber remembers fondly hanging out in the volunteer fire station where his dad was once fire chief. He attended Texas A&M University, enjoys local craft beers, hiking, and hanging out with his family. Recently, January 2022, he and his family were preparing to evacuate from the Marshall Fire. He really appreciates the work of the fire service and is showing his gratitude by supporting the mission of the NFHC by providing sound financial advice. graysonhofferber@gmail.com 🌀

The National Fire Heritage Center (NFHC) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization working to preserve the written history of "fire in America." The NFHC is both a fire history library and archive as well as a documentation preservation project. Our collection of over 15,000+ cataloged items consists of written documents donated by those in the private and public sectors who have carefully collected, curated, and taken care of our past history.



Heritage Hall

A Proposal to Archive the History of the Fire Service/ Fire Protection Disciplines in America



ORGANIZATION HISTORY

The National Fire Heritage Center is the result of a 2003 study published by the U.S. Fire Administration entitled, "Heritage Hall." This seminal study identified a "need to collect, preserve, and provide access to the historical records of the fire service/fire protection disciplines in the United States." Heritage Hall is the strategic planning document that guides the NFHC organization's future.

Our preservation efforts not only include firefighting, but also fire prevention, fire protection and related disciplines. Prior to the establishment of the NFHC, there was no centralized, coordinated archival functions of fire protection in the United States. Much of the written history of "fire in America" is challenging to locate and sadly, much information is already permanently lost.

The resources found in the NFHC Library/Archives, support researchers, historians, individuals, and organizations interested in fire protection and related disciplines. This includes municipal and rural firefighting, aviation firefighting, wildland firefighting, federal and DoD firefighting, design and engineering, research, architecture, fire training and academic programs, equipment manufacturing, regulations and standards, fire equipment distributors, and any other area of fire protection.

Our Mission

To collect, preserve and provide access to the historical records of the fire service and fire protection disciplines to support developments in fire safety and emergency services operations. This mission was defined in the founding strategic plan "Heritage Hall."

Preserving the Perishable.

Our Vision

To become the definitive on-line digital network for fire-related history and information.

Our Values

Are centered on dedication, commitment, and service; to the industries, communities, and people we humbly serve.

Our Purpose

Is to preserve fire service and fire protection historical information for current and future generations of researchers, historians, instructors, students and anyone who enjoys learning from the past, how we got to where we are today, and to help inform where we will be tomorrow. *"Connecting resources to those who need to know."*



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