

136th Annual
Virginia State Firefighter's Association

Memorial Service
and
**Dogwood Tree
Dedication Ceremony**

September 20, 2023

Hampton Roads, Virginia



2023 Memorial Service

Welcome and Invocation

Dale Jamison
Chaplain of VSFA

Scripture and Poem

Isaiah 40:30-31

Joan Dempsey
Vice President of AVSFA

Dedicated To Our Fallen Heroes
by Katharine Blohm

Memorial Message

Dale Jamison
Chaplain of VSFA

In Loving Memory

of those who have passed since July 1, 2022

Pete Kirby
President of VSFA
and
Lisa Saul
President of AVSFA

“Be Thou My Vision”

(Words are on insert.)

Teri Norton
Tappahannock/Essex Auxiliary

5-5-5 Tolling of the Bell Reading

Ayla Hottel
Chaplain of AVSFA

The “Ringing of the Bell”

Lauren Kirby
*Past President, Centreville VFD
and Life Member, Auxiliary to the Vienna VFD*

Please sign the sheets on the clipboard so we know who attended the 2023 Memorial Service. These signed sheets will go to the Dogwood Tree department recipient to bury when the tree is planted.

Thank you.

Let us remember...

**Alexandria Volunteer Fire Department
Columbia Engine & Motor Company #4**

George Hoff (Bud) West

Augusta County Fire & Rescue

Walter Newton Robertson

Boones Mill Volunteer Fire Department

Jeremy Dailey

Buena Vista Fire Department

William Crouch

Christiansburg Volunteer Fire Department

Richard H. (Dickie) Horne

Covington Volunteer Fire Department

Larry Edwin Snead

Fox Hill Volunteer Fire Company Auxiliary

✿ Jane Rice

Kenbridge Volunteer Fire Department, Inc.

Charlie W. "Chuck" Schumaker, III

Loudoun County Fire Rescue

Michael Francis Mahoney

Manassas Volunteer Fire Company

Tomyns H. Dickins

Northampton Volunteer Fire Company

Robert Farrell

Phoebus Volunteer Fire Company

Cheryl Anne Marek

Poquoson Volunteer Fire Department & Auxiliary

✿ Susan D. Herring

Paul Lindsay Sr.

Riner Volunteer Fire Department & Ladies Auxiliary

William "Bill" Greear

Jack Lloyd Martin

✿ Anna Mae Pack

Round Hill Community Fire & Rescue Department

Chester Taylor Lauck

Salem Volunteer Fire Department

Briant K. Atkins

Jeremiah "Dickie" Atkins, III

Sedley Volunteer Fire Department

James Allen Creasey

Selma Volunteer Fire Company

Carter David Wickline

Spotsylvania Volunteer Fire Company

Travis Prien

Vienna Volunteer Fire Department

Ben W. Wenning Jr.

Woodstock Fire Department, Inc. Auxiliary

✿ Alma F. Hottle

✿ denotes Auxiliary Member

“Be Thou My Vision”

**Be thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me, save that thou art;
Thou my best thought, by day or by night,
Waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.**

**Be thou my Wisdom, and thou my true Word;
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord;
Thou my great Father, and I thy true son,
Thou in my dwelling, and I with thee one.**

**Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise;
Thou mine inheritance, now and always;
Thou and thou only, first in my heart,
High King of heaven, my treasure thou art.**

5-5-5 Tolling of the Bell

Historically, long before radios and computer-aided dispatch, in the late 19th Century, Americans in cities across the country either had to go to the nearest firehouse to report a fire, or, in the larger cities, go to a street corner and pull the handle on a fire alarm box. These boxes were found at intersections throughout a given city, and each one had its own special numeric identifier. Pulling that handle sent a signal to a fire alarm office that looked up the box location and transmitted the alarm via telegraph to all firehouses due to respond.

Firefighters at each station learned which boxes to which they were first, second, or third due to respond and where they were located. When the telegraph activated a receiver at the firehouse, it triggered a series of bells to ring, alerting personnel to an emergency. If the series corresponded to boxes to which they were expected to respond, they immediately scrambled for their apparatus and departed for that location. In those days, if a box alarm was struck, the fire was usually easily located by arriving firefighters.

In New York City, this box alarm system was well-developed. Tradition carries the story that the box to which firefighters responded and lost the first career firefighter in the line of duty was Box 5-5-5. So significant was this loss felt that Box 5-5-5 was retired and replaced with a new numeric assignment. Thereafter, a Signal 5-5-5 transmitted by the fire alarm office served to notify all department personnel that a firefighter had lost their life. This is heard as five bells, a pause, five bells, a pause, and five more bells.

That tradition continues to be observed today throughout the American fire service at memorial services to recognize the loss of our brothers and sisters, ringing a fire bell to make these losses known. At First Responder Virginia, we will ring the bell to honor those lost over the years since we last gathered.

Special Thanks

Teri Norton, our vocalist, a member of Tappahannock-Essex VFD Auxiliary. Thank you to those who assisted with the wreath and the placement of the flowers.

The Virginia Department of Fire Programs for providing and setting up the projector for the slide show and to those handing out the programs for this evening's Memorial Service.

Please take a moment to snap a picture with the wreath in honor of your loved one. Also, feel free to take a flower in remembrance of them.