

SPAAAF

Silver Trumpet

InterChapter News



First Quarter 2017

Belle Isle Reserve Chapter

From Tailgater Newsletter

SYRACUSE FIRE DEPARTMENT MEMORIAL SERVICE

The Syracuse Fire Department conducts an annual memorial service on February 3rd remembering those Syracuse Firefighters who have lost their lives in the line of duty. The date is the anniversary of the 1939 Collins Block fire where nine SFD firefighters perished. The annual ceremony honored all 45 Syracuse firefighters who have died in their service to the city. See Pages 2 & 3 for more on the Collins Block fire.



CNY Member and Retired Syracuse Deputy Fire Chief **Thomas Laun** reads the names of each of the 45 Syracuse firefighters who have died in the line of duty. "Let there be no more," Laun said.

Photo By & Courtesy of Mike Greenlar, syracuse.com

COLLINS BLOCK FIRE CLAIMS LIVES OF NINE SYRACUSE FIREFIGHTERS

**February 3, 1939
BULLETIN**

EIGHT MEN PLUNGED THREE STORIES IN SYRACUSE BLAZE LITTLE HOPE HELD FOR LIVES OF VICTIMS AS RESCUERS SEARCH SMOKING RUINS:

Police and fire department officials said the cause of the blaze which was discovered at 1:50 A.M., was uncertain. Scores of fire companies, called out by a general alarm, poured streams of water into the building for 45 minutes before the flames were brought under control. Despite the early hour at which the fire occurred, hundreds were attracted to the scene by the spectacular blaze. For a time, adjoining structures were threatened by a westerly wind which showered them with sparks.



Collins Block 225 East Genesee Street

Rescue crews searched the smoking ruins of a five story brick office building at dawn today, for eight firemen trapped when the roof of the fire-swept structure collapsed. Amid uncertainty whether any of the six remained alive, the city mobilized its police, fire and public works department forces to speed the work of rescue. A seventh fireman, rescued an hour after the collapse, was taken to a hospital critically injured. Fire department officials reported the missing men were on the third floor of the building, when the roof collapsed with a roar like an explosion, carrying them into the cellar under a mass of falling wreckage. Rescue efforts were hindered by fear that the work of digging in the ruins might bring down one of the walls of the ruined building. All ambulances in the city were dispatched to the scene.



COLLAPSE OF THE FRONT WALL

RECOVERY EFFORTS

Syracuse (AP) -- Eight firemen, trapped in the collapse of a burning office building, were given up for dead today as rescue crews searched the still smoking ruins in the heart of the city's business section. "All hope has been abandoned," declared the Fire Chief Edward W. Gieselman. "The men are dead -- they are buried under tons of wreckage." Hours after the collapse of the final wall, occasional spurts of flame still came from the blackened ruins hindering the work of weary rescue crews who continued their hopeless effort to reach the entombed men. Gieselman said it might be hours before the bodies of the firemen were removed. Meantime, in a fire station less than a block away, weeping wives and children of the missing men huddled together still awaiting a word of hope. District Attorney Donald MacWhinney already had launched an investigation into the cause of the fire. He said one of the first witnesses questioned was Clifford Keep, operator of a restaurant on the ground floor of the wrecked building, which was known as the Collins Block. Mr. Keep had experienced some labor trouble recently, MacWhinney said and that he intended to investigate the situation.

Collapse of the roof occurred at about 4 A.M. as firemen poked through the smoke-filled upper floors. The wrecked building is located on East Genesee Street, near the heart of the business district and a block off Salina Street, main thoroughfare of the city. The first floor was occupied by a restaurant, while the upper floors were untenanted. Officials of the Onondaga County Savings Bank, which owns the structure, were unable to estimate the loss immediately. The operator of the ground floor restaurant, however, estimated her own loss at \$7,000 to \$10,000. Fire Marshall Charles Wilkes said firewalls apparently saved buildings immediately adjoining.



NOTE: The Chapter's 1923 Ahrens Fox, "Big Bertha", would have been in the first alarm assignment to the Collins Block.

"The Fire Chief's Handbook," Fred Shepperd, 1932

