



Toledo Fire & Rescue Department

MediaAlert

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RELEASE DATE: October 11, 2017

WHAT: *Ohio Historical Marker Placement*

WHEN: *Friday, October 13, 2017 at 11:00 a.m.*

WHERE: *In Front of ProMedica Headquarters, 100 Madison Ave*

Ohio Historical Marker Placement 1894 King-Quale Grain Elevator Fire

On Friday, October 13, 2017 at 11:00 a.m., the Toledo Fire & Rescue Department, in cooperation with ProMedica will be placing an Ohio Historical Marker in front of the ProMedica Headquarters, 100 Madison Ave, to mark the site of the 1894, King-Quale Grain Elevator Fire that took the life of Toledo Fire Department Captain James Fraser.

Fire Chief Luis Santiago, ProMedica President & CEO Randy Oostra, and family members of Captain James Fraser will be on hand to commemorate the event which will include a traditional firefighters Last Alarm Ceremony.

On the night of January 3, 1894, a large fire broke out in the massive King-Quale Grain Elevator. A westward wind from the Maumee River drove flames toward the center of Toledo's business district. The blaze destroyed several buildings including the Chamber of Commerce and the West & Truax building.

Captain Fraser and his crew began the firefighting battle, assigned to attack the main body of the fire. They reached the top of the King-Quale Grain Elevator very quickly only to be greeted by several explosions that were determined to be caused by super-heated grain dust that had built up in the elevator. Captain Fraser and Fireman Alfred Blaine then moved to the third floor to find a more advantageous location to better fight the fire. When finally reaching the third floor they were met with intense heat and smoke. By all accounts both men were driven to the floor by the extreme conditions.

As later described by Fireman Blaine to a newspaper reporter:

"I could stand it no longer, and so I got down and followed the hose down. Fraser, peering through the smoke said: 'Where are you Fred?' 'Follow the hose down, leap,' I said in reply. This is the last words I heard of the Captain. I crept down to the second floor when I too lost the hose. I laid down, covered myself up with my coat and gave myself up. Finally, I saw a light and made for it. I managed to reach a window, when I was found by the men. I told them to go back after Fraser and thought they had for some time afterward." - Toledo Blade: January 6, 1894

With the fire, eventually being extinguished, crews continued to searched for the remains of their missing comrade, Captain James Fraser. After several days, the search efforts were suspended on Jan 11, 1894. Search crews recovered a partially melted brass fire hose nozzle, twisted wire rims of Captain Fraser's spectacles, and a brass buckle from his suspenders. Captains Fraser's body was never found.

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