

**RARE STEAM APPARATUS**—Built in 1893 for Detroit's Engine Company #2, this Amoskeag steam engine could deliver 1100 gallons of water per minute. It's part of the collection of antique fire fighting equipment at Fort Wayne's Firefighters' Museum.

## Blaze of glory: Museum houses antique fire engines

Fort Wayne, Indiana—

If you ever wanted to be a firefighter (and who didn't), there's place where your dreams can come true. Kids of all ages can live out those engine house fantasies at Fort Wayne's Firefighters' Museum. About all that's missing is the dalmatians.

Housed in a reconstructed 1893 fire house, the museum is a center for educating the public, and especially children, about fire safety. One of the highlights is the fire safety maze where visitors participate in a realistic setting with simulated life-threatening conditions.

The alarm room with its alarm boxes and watch desk reenacts the dispatch of turn-of-the-century fire fighting equipment. Antique nozzles, spanner wrenches, couplings and fire extinguishers are on display, as well as memorabilia from volunteer fire brigades and drill teams.

The museum's most eye-catching asset is its collection of antique fire fighting apparatus, which includes an 1848 hand engine. This engine required the muscle power of 24 volunteers, who when pumping at a steady beat, produced a one-inch stream of water that could reach the top of a four-story building.

One of the nation's few surviving steam fire engines is on display, a

gleaming 1893 model originally purchased by the City of Detroit. This over-sized steamer could deliver 1100 gallons per minute and saw service in Detroit for nearly 30 years.

The museum's Athens-Fox pumper was used in Fort Wayne from 1927 to 1962 and was capable of shooting water over 13-story buildings. Known as the "Rolls-Royce" of fire engines, this model is highly prized by collectors.

Other apparatus in the collection include a 1955 American LaFrance pumper, 1938 International pumper, 1947 American LaFrance 100-foot aerial ladder truck, two Seagrave ladder trucks from the '20s and a Cadillac ambulance, circa 1953.

The Firefighters' Museum is located in downtown Fort Wayne on West Washington Boulevard between Harrison and Webster Streets, about two blocks west of the Convention Center.

Hours are 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. daily. Tours are available by appointment. A small donation is requested for admission. Call 219-426-0051 for more information.

Fort Wayne is located in northeast Indiana along Interstate 69, about 40 miles south of Interstate 80-90 (Indiana Toll Road).

JOHN SNYDER

## Collectors book it to Lansing

Lansing, Michigan—

Michigan's largest gathering of book dealers, some 100 strong, will offer their wares at the Michigan Antiquarian Book and Paper Show, Sunday, April 7.

Set for the Lansing Civic Center, the show features something of interest for every collector: first editions, illustrated books, autographs, Michigan history, children's books, magazines, science fiction, Civil War, sheet music, Americana, prints,

postcards, art, maps, fine bindings, cookbooks, mysteries, private press and ephemera.

Admission to the show is \$2; children age 13 and under are admitted free. Show hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Lansing Civic Center is located at 505 W. Allegan St., near the State Capitol, and is easily accessible via Interstate 496.

For more information, call 517-332-0112.

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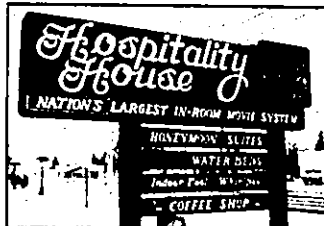
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