

Alexandria Gazette Packet



25 CENTS

SERVING ALEXANDRIA FOR OVER 200 YEARS • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

MAY 5, 2022

Welcome Home **Historic Prettyman Carriage returns to Firehouse Museum.**

By JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The historic Prettyman Hose Reel Carriage was returned to its place of honor in the Friendship Firehouse Museum April 30 following two years of conservation and preservation work.

Conservator Josiah Wagener was on hand as the ornate hose reel carriage, purchased in 1858 by the Friendship Fire Company,

was welcomed back to the City of Alexandria.

“This has been a very interesting project to work on,” Wagener said. “It’s a rare thing to find a historic firehouse that still has its original apparatus in it. This hose reel has been consistently owned and in this city its entire life. Not a lot of places have that anymore.”

The hose reel carriage was made in Alexandria in the North Pitt Street shop of coach

maker and Friendship member Robert F. Prettyman. It featured state of the art technology of its time and provided firefighters a steady stream of water.

“One hundred and fifty-eight years ago this piece of equipment looked this beautiful,” said Jimmie McClellan, president of the board of trustees of the Friendship Veterans Fire Engine Association. “One hundred and sixty-four years took its toll but now it is back the way it is intended to be -- as a

display of art and functional equipment for generations to come.”

Fire Chief Corey Smedley was among those participating in moving the hose reel carriage back into place inside the museum on South Alfred Street. Joining him were movement teams of city officials, Friendship Veterans Fire Engine Association Trustees and donors, and members of the Alexandria Fire Department.

SEE WELCOME HOME, PAGE 10

Welcome Home

FROM PAGE 1

The restoration was made possible through donations from the Friendship Veterans Fire Engine Association, Custom Fire Apparatus, Simpson Development Corp., Virginia Association of Museums Top 10 Endangered Artifact Program, the Historic Alexandria Foundation, Donald F. Simpson, Sr., Jeanne Jacob and Gerry Frank, Marion Moon, David P. Baker, Joe Shumard, Spring2Action Alexandria, and community donors.

Now back on exhibit, the Prettyman Hose Reel Carriage is a popular attraction at the Friendship Firehouse Museum, which features 1850s firefighting apparatus such as buckets, hoses and axes. Also on display is Friendship's mid-19th century suction engine elaborately decorated with the company's clasped-hands insignia.

"This was a fun project to work on," Wagener said. "But I am glad to see it back in its rightful home."

Movement teams return the Prettyman Hose Reel Carriage into the Friendship Firehouse Museum April 30.



Fire Chief Corey Smedley, left, assists in moving the historic Prettyman Hose Reel Carriage into the Friendship Firehouse Museum April 30 following two years of conservation work.



PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Members of the Friendship Veterans Fire Engine Association board of trustees gather at the April 30 ceremony returning the historic Prettyman Hose Reel Carriage to Alexandria.



City Manager Jim Parajon, Mayor Justin Wilson, Fire Chief Corey Smedley and Director of the Office of Historic Alexandria Gretchen Bulova at the ceremony returning the Prettyman Hose Reel Carriage to the Friendship Firehouse Museum following two years of restoration.



Conservator Josiah Wagener with the Prettyman Hose Reel Carriage April 30 at the Friendship Firehouse Museum.