

June 2007

A summary report on:

The New Jersey Fire Engine and Equipment Museum at Allaire Inc.

This is the formal title of our 501c3 non-profit corporation.

The New Jersey Fire Museum

The New Jersey Fallen Firefighter's Memorial

An interactive Family Safety Education Center

“Fire-Works FireTruck!”

The Traveling Fire Safety Exhibit

These are the current operating titles of the four components of the project.

Our Vision Statement:

“To significantly reduce injury and the loss of life and property and to honor the heritage and the sacrifice of New Jersey’s firefighters. “

Our Focus is Fire:

Perhaps the most powerful force in nature! Our friend and foe! Fire is life-giving and life threatening! Whether adults or children, we all rely on fire but we must respect its power and learn to use it safely.

The **Education Center** (still to be named) will be an interactive discovery center devoted to fire safety. It will feature interactive displays, demonstrations on fire combustion, fire behavior, firefighting practices, arson investigation, fire history and firefighting equipment.

The **Education Center** will also establish out-reach programs in cooperation with the NJ State Safety Council to bring training to communities throughout New Jersey. The premiere element of this program will be the **“Fire-Works-Fire Truck!”**

The NJ Fire Engine and Equipment Museum is a 501C(3) non-profit corporation chartered by the State of New Jersey for the purpose of establishing and operating a fire museum and fire safety education center.

Our Primary Goals are Educational and Historical:

Educational: Teach safety awareness and accident prevention at The Education Center, an interactive hands-on fire safety educational experience.

Historical: To Preserve New Jersey's rich fire-fighting heritage through the restoration and operation of vintage apparatus and the interpretive display of tools and artifacts.

Project Background:

The project began with a gift of antique fire apparatus and artifacts to the state by Mr. Ernest N. Day many years ago. The State Legislature authorized the construction of a Fire Engine and Equipment Museum, a commission selected a site, and architectural plans were prepared. During the 1980s, the withdrawal of state funds and the lack of a well organized constituency put the project into dormancy. During 2002, the project was resurrected with a new emphasis on fire safety education. It was observed that the potential audience for a family-oriented "hands-on" education center was much larger than that for a traditional "look-don't touch" museum. The non-profit corporation was transferred to a new Board of Directors and work began to bring the project to fruition through a public/private partnership.

Our Public/Private Capital Financing Plan:

1. *Membership Campaign* for individuals, families and fire departments.
2. *"Light the Flame" Campaign* for corporations and benefactors who share our vision for enhanced public safety education.
3. *State Funds* to fulfill the commitment to capital construction funding.

During 2000/2001, we initiated the *Membership Campaign* by establishing a quarterly newsletter, a website and collecting thousands of petition signatures of support. Political sponsors introduced new legislation but late in the year, the economic slowdown, state budget deficit and the events of 9-11-01 forced a shift in state funding priorities.

During 2002/2004, we continued the *Membership Campaign* and we selected a new operating title, **"FireWorks-USA"** to paint a broader picture of who and what we are. We established an Honorary Board of Directors. We selected an experienced fund-raiser to organize the *"Light the Flame"* campaign but were unable to hire the fund-raiser.

During 2005/2007 we continued the *Membership Campaign*, expanded the Active and Honorary Boards of Directors and reached out for corporate support beginning with Fire Service vendors.

In 2007 we began using the simplified title **"NJ Fire Museum and Fallen Firefighter's Memorial"** and expanded our memorial benefit activities.

Planned Educational Programs and Services:

The **Education Center** will have an appealing name such as **"Where's the Fire?"**, and will be a dynamic interactive learning center allowing visitors to explore the world of fire without risk of injury. Instead of being lectured on the dangers of fire, visitors will utilize virtual reality technology to see a spark turn into a blaze, experience the effects of fire and the hazards of unplanned escape attempts. An audio-visual/ theater stage set presentation will show visitors common mistakes in home fire safety and

how to plan and practice escape from fire. The models for this center include “**Survive Alive**” in Indianapolis IN and “**FDNY FireZone**” on 51st Street, Rockefeller Center, New York City.

The **Education Center** will also allow visitors to experience the work of firefighting! Virtual reality technology will transport visitors into the midst of a burning structure to operate hose lines and fire extinguishers! They can put on turn-out gear and rush to a blaze in our fire truck simulator. A variety of learning station kiosks will educate and entertain visitors on fire and other family and home accident and preventive health issues. The facility will utilize all available computer-based technology including video arcade, virtual reality, simulators and touch-screen systems.

“**Fire-Works-Fire Truck!**” is a premiere element in our *Educational Outreach Program*. Developed in coordination with the New Jersey State Safety Council, this big red rig will be a highly visible traveling display carrying our family safety education programs in concert with local fire prevention programs and tailored by season and audience across the state on a year-round basis.

Planned Historical Displays and Programs

The Ernest N. Day collection contains significant historical apparatus including hand powered equipment from the Colonial Era, steam fire engines from the Horse-drawn Era and rare apparatus from the Early Motorized Era. We will arrest the flow of memorabilia and artifacts out of the state by providing a permanent New Jersey home for them. Rotating exhibits will present vignettes of New Jersey fire and disaster history.

Planned Memorial and Services

A beautiful memorial to honor the valor and selfless dedication of firefighters who have made the ultimate sacrifice will be located on the entrance plaza of the main facility surrounded by personalized memorial paving bricks donated by state residents.

The site will host annual Fallen Firefighter Ceremonies and other special events to commemorate Fire Department or other ceremonies upon request.

In addition to the above elements, we will sponsor a range of special events including musters of vintage and modern fire apparatus and family-oriented events to maintain public interest in our mission.

Our Staff and Governance:

Our current “pro bono” staff consists of the Board of Directors, Officers, Executive and Volunteer Committees. A critical near term objective is to hire an Executive Director to manage the “Light the Flame” corporate campaign and to continue program development.

The Honorary Board of Directors was established to cultivate endorsements and support from government, education, the Fire Service and business communities.

Future staffing will include an Assistant Director/curator, Educator/Facilitators, Administrative Assistant, Gift Shop Manager and volunteer restoration specialists.

The museum is affiliated with New Jersey State Safety Council and the New Jersey Division of Fire Safety (DFS), Department of Community Affairs (DCA). We plan to expand our contacts through the Public Education Advisory Council of the State Fire Safety Commission as well as through direct coordination with institutions of higher education and health maintenance organizations.

Our Facilities:

The planned main facility will be approximately 34,000 square feet and comprised of permanent and rotating exhibits, a children's safety adventure learning center, a theater/lecture hall, an educator and fire service resource center, multi-purpose/banquet room and gift shop.

Adjacent to the main facility, a meadow will be used for display, field day events, and antique fire apparatus musters. Picnic groves and a playground will be located adjacent to the main facility.

At the rear of the property will be the restoration and repair shops which will allow viewing and tours of work-in-progress for apparatus and artifact restoration work.

With regard to our location:

- The Allaire Park site is already allocated by public law to the museum site. It is adjacent to existing historic technology attractions and the property is adequate for the facility needed to house the **Fire Museum, Memorial, Education Center** and associated storage and restoration shops.
- An urban location could provide greater public visibility for the **Education Center**, a key consideration in drawing corporate sponsorship. It may also facilitate a higher sustained rate of attendance through the greater accessibility to school, tourist and general public traffic found in a more densely populated site.

The decision concerning location(s) will ultimately be decided based on the level of state financing, corporate sponsor preferences, interest from redevelopment agencies and political support based on revitalization and tourism initiatives.

Outlook for the future:

We continue and expand all of our fund-raising efforts. We will promote a Two-Year \$2M plan that would allow initial construction and operations. We seeking new legislation to support this effort and will expand affiliations and communications with government, educational and fire service agencies to seek cooperative financing opportunities. We seek active participation by the Honorary Board of Directors to support fund-raising. The Volunteer Committee will continue the *Membership Campaign* through our newsletter and website and public displays and expand our efforts to promote the Memorial through a series of sports-related benefits.

(This document was updated in January 2008)