



**Preliminary Program and Registration
2008 Fire Museum Seminar**

Aurora, Illinois • September 6 – 8th, 2008



Seminar & Membership Meeting Aurora, Illinois • September 6 – 8th, 2008

Join your fellow museum colleagues as we learn, share and network. The Fire Museum Network is proud to announce its 2008 Fire Museum Seminar to be held in Aurora, Illinois on September 6, 7, and 8th, 2008.

In 1989 the International Association of Fire Chiefs sponsored an informal “seminar” for fire museums as a part of their large conference held in Indianapolis. Nine fire museums, from New York to California, attended that first meeting, and by the end of the first day, all vowed to come back again. The idea for an annual Fire Museum Seminar was born, and now, nearly twenty years later, museums are still coming back.

For those of you who have never been, the Fire Museum Seminar is a mix of formal presentations, informal discussions, and tours of local fire and non-fire museum sites.... It's educational sessions about both operating a museum and firefighting history.... It's for those who are just starting a fire museum, and those who have been around a while.... It is a time to learn, and a place to see and hear what dozens of other museums are doing (or perhaps what they should be doing).... It is a chance to share problems and solutions, exchange ideas and information, and compare your organization with others.... It is an opportunity to network. It is late nights spent discussing how many steam fire engines are left in the country; new exhibit techniques; or the merits of the latest museum collections database program. In short, it's... great friends, great food, and a great fun!

We are pleased to offer two full days of educational sessions on Saturday and Sunday — ranging in topics from fundraising, to educational programming, to collections management issues. On Sunday, we will view and evaluate two award-winning exhibits at nearby museums. On Monday, an optional bus tour narrated by Chicago Fire Department historian Ken Little will travel into Chicago and retrace the steps of the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, and view many famous firefighting sites.

We encourage you to review the registration materials and
REGISTER BEFORE AUGUST 5th TO GET THE BEST DISCOUNT!

Schedule at a Glance

(all times and topics are still tentative)

Saturday	Sunday	Monday
<p>Breakfast at the Comfort Inn Suites - (included with your room reservation)</p>	<p>Breakfast at the Comfort Inn Suites - (included with your room reservation)</p>	<p>Breakfast at the Comfort Inn Suites - (included with your room reservation)</p> <p>7:45 - Load Bus</p> <p>8:00 - Bus dives to Chicago</p>
<p>9:00 AM - Presentation at hotel Welcome and Introductions</p>	<p>9:00 AM - Presentation at ARFM Exhibition evaluation</p>	<p>Bus Tour into the City of Chicago - Chicago Firefighting History and the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 Tour (part 1)</p>
<p><i>Break</i></p>		
<p>10:00 AM - Presentation at hotel The front line: Is your museum a welcoming place? Defining the customer experience</p>	<p>10:00 AM - Load Vans <i>vans dive to site #1</i></p>	
<p><i>Break</i></p>		
<p>11:00 AM - Presentation at hotel Funding resources and grant opportunities for museums</p>	<p>10:45 AM - Tour of the Cantigny's 1st Div. Museum</p>	
<p><i>Break</i></p>	<p>Discussion: . .</p>	
<p>12:00 Noon - Lunch at hotel</p>	<p>12:30 AM - Load Vans <i>vans dive to site #2</i></p>	<p>Lunch - (on your own) - at Water Tower Place</p>
<p><i>Break</i></p>		
<p>1:00 PM - Presentation at hotel Donations and bequests, when and do you say no?</p>	<p>1:15 PM - Box Lunch at Napersetlemnt</p>	<p>Bus Tour into the City of Chicago - Chicago Firefighting History and the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 Tour (part 2)</p>
<p><i>Break</i></p>	<p><i>Break</i></p>	
<p>2:00 PM - Presentation at hotel Basics of museum education and interpretation</p>	<p>2:00 PM - Tour of the Napersetlement Museum</p>	
<p><i>Break</i></p>	<p>Discussion: . .</p>	
<p>Presentation - at hotel "Inexpensive" to "Interactive" - an evolutionary tale of our exhibits</p>	<p>3:45 PM - Load Vans <i>vans return to ARFM</i></p>	
<p><i>Break</i></p>		
<p>3:00 PM - Tour Aurora Regional Fire Museum</p>	<p>4:30 PM - Presentation - at ARFM Beyond the basics - inventorying, Moving, and rehousing your collections</p>	
<p><i>Break</i></p>	<p><i>Break</i></p>	
<p>5:30 PM - Dinner</p>	<p>5:30 PM - Dinner</p>	<p>5:15 PM - Load Bus <i>bus returns to Aurora</i></p>
<p>Presentation - at ARFM Fire Service Myths</p>	<p>Presentation - at ARFM The Great Chicago Fire</p>	<p>6:30 PM - Evening on our own</p>
<p>Evening on our own</p>	<p>Evening on our own</p>	<p>Evening on our own</p>

Saturday

Breakfast at the Comfort Inn Suites - (included with your room reservation)

9:00 AM - Presentation at hotel

Welcome and Introductions

Break

10:00 AM - Presentation at hotel

**The front line: Is your museum a welcoming place?
Defining the customer experience**

Break

11:00 AM - Presentation at hotel

Funding resources and grant opportunities for museums

Break

12:00 Noon - Lunch at hotel

Break

1:00 PM - Presentation at hotel

Donations and bequests, when and do you say no?

Break

2:00 PM - Presentation at hotel

Basics of museum education and interpretation

Break

Presentation - at hotel

"Inexpensive" to "Interactive" - an evolutionary tale of our exhibits

Break

3:00 PM - Tour

Aurora Regional Fire Museum

Break

5:30 PM - Dinner

Presentation - at ARFM

Fire Service Myths

Evening on our own

The front line: is your museum a welcoming place? Defining the customer experience

Sure you've got shiny old fire engines, but is that all your visitors want, and is that what they will remember? This session will help define your audience, and what they are expecting from their visit.

Milking the cash cow: funding resources and grant opportunities for museums

This session won't help you find the elusive pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, but it will familiarize you with the funding pyramid and the very basics of fundraising and grantwriting.

Donations and bequests: if, when, and how you say no?

Museums are often referred to as "the community's attic" but they can't (and shouldn't) collect everything! Understand when, why, and how you can politely say "no" when donors want to give you their collections.

Basics of museum education and interpretation

Museums are nonprofit Educational institutions, yet often the educational role becomes secondary to that of collecting and exhibiting the stuff.

"Inexpensive" to "Interactive" — an evolutionary tale of the Aurora Regional Fire Museum's exhibits

The ARFM's exhibits have evolved from "do it yourself" displays on the cheap-n-easy, to professionally designed and built interactive exhibits. This session offers something for everyone. Smaller museums can learn practical tips from the "cheap-n-easy" and larger museums can learn about hiring and working with professionals.



Fire Service Myths

True or false — Ben Franklin "invented" fire departments? The firefighters symbol comes from the Knights of Malta? Dalmatians were firehouse dogs? Test your knowledge and hear some of the history behind these common myths, and other firehouse tools and terms. This informal presentation is for everyone who ever wondered, why are fire engines red? Why does a chief have five "bugles?" Why are fire hydrants sometimes also called "fire plugs" and why do we toll bells and play bagpipes at firefighter funerals? We will explore the origins behind some of the most popular American Fire Services symbols and myths.

Exhibition evaluation

What makes an exhibit successful, and how do we measure that success? This session will help guide you at evaluating an exhibit by looking at its style, content, labels, and design.

Tour — First Division Museum at Catigny Park

Imagine walking through a trench in World War I, crouching in a LST boat during the D-Day invasion of WW2, or trekking through a Vietnamese jungle — these are a few of the immersive experiences created in the First Division Museum's main exhibition hall. Using the techniques learned in our morning session, we will evaluate and critique this high-end immersive exhibit experience and discuss what elements might be adapted to fire museums.



Tour — Naper Settlement Museum

After a quick visit to Naper Settlement's recreated Firehouse (to see the village's original Button Handtub on display), we will explore the exhibit "Brushstrokes from the Past." Identify the exhibit's themes and sections, and discover what interactive elements have been included to bring the exhibit to life. Then we will discuss how to apply these techniques to your museum.



Beyond the basics of collections management inventorying, moving, and rehousing your collections

This lively session is for those who have some basic knowledge of what they "should" be doing to catalog and care for their collections but don't know where to begin. Practical steps and procedures for inventorying, cataloging, and ultimately moving and rehousing your collections will be presented.

The Great Chicago Fire - and the myth of the Cow

Did the cow REALLY do it? Historian Dick Bales will present his theories on the cause of the Great Chicago Fire. We'll also share some of our knowledge of the fire and some behind-the-scenes tales in working with the History Channel, the Discovery Channel and the Weather Channel on Great Chicago Fire related shows.

Sunday

Breakfast at the Comfort Inn Suites - (included with your room reservation)

9:00 AM - Presentation at ARFM

Exhibition evaluation

10:00 AM - Load Vans

vans drive to site #1

10:45 AM - Tour of the

Cantigny's 1st Div. Museum

Discussion:

12:30 AM - Load Vans

vans drive to site #2

1:15 PM - Box Lunch at Napersettlemnt

Break

2:00 PM - Tour of the

Napersettlement Museum

Discussion:

3:45 PM - Load Vans

vans return to ARFM

4:30 PM - Presentation - at ARFM

Beyond the basics - inventorying, Moving, and rehousing your collections

Break

5:30 PM - Dinner

Presentation - at ARFM

The Great Chicago Fire

Evening on our own



Monday, Sept. 8th —

The Great Chicago Fire Tour

The Great Chicago fire of 1871, the Iroquois Theater, the Our Lady of the Angels school, the Snorkel truck, and red and green apparatus lights, and even the firehouse sliding pole — there is no doubt about it, Chicago is a “fire” town! On Monday, September 7th we have made arrangements for a firefighting history tour of Chicago. Noted Chicago Fire Department historian Ken Little will be our guide as we ride a chartered bus for a day-long tour in and around the City of Chicago.

The tour begins at the Chicago Fire Academy (built on the site where the Great Chicago Fire started), and retraces the path of the fire as it marched through the city. Time and schedule permitting, we will see many historic Chicago firehouses, pass by the sites of famous blazes, and visit the new (unfinished) Fire Museum of Greater Chicago.

This tour is being offered as an option. There will be an additional fee of (\$60) per person for this tour. Lunch will be on your own during a scheduled stop at Water Tower Place mall. Seating is limited to a first-come-first serve basis.

Your Hosts —

the Aurora Regional Fire Museum

The Aurora Regional Fire Museum is located in Aurora’s old Central Fire Station, built in 1894.

The old Central Fire Station served the city for eighty-five years, but by 1979 the apparatus and men had outgrown the old building and work began on a new fire department headquarters next door. There was much discussion about the fate of the old building, and after sitting vacant for seven years, a group was organized to save the old station and transform it into a museum.



Now fully restored, the Aurora Regional Fire Museum serves over 5,000 visitors annually and is home to five pieces of fire apparatus on exhibit — ranging from an 1850s Button Hand Pumper to a 1948 American LaFrance 700 series engine. The museum’s second floor “Hayloft Theater” plays host to numerous civic groups and public meetings. Our location in downtown Aurora is ideal. We are immediately next-door to the Aurora’s new central fire station, and within a short walk from the commuter train station, three other museums, a riverboat gambling casino, and performing arts center.

The Host Hotel —

Comfort Suites, City Center

This year’s host hotel is the *Comfort Suites City Center* in Downtown Aurora located adjacent to Aurora’s (new) Central Fire Station and the Aurora Regional Fire Museum. The hotel’s group rate includes free breakfast and lots of extra amenities. The hotel has very LIMITED AVAILABILITY so we encourage you to make your reservations NOW! The reduced group rate expires August 5th, but should you make a hotel reservation and your plans change, you may

cancel your reservation before 5:00pm on Sept. 5th without penalty.

Comfort Suites - City Center
111 N. Broadway
Aurora, IL 60505
toll free: (866) 896-2888
local phone: (630) 896-2800
www.ComfortSuitesAurora.com

The group rate is \$113.52 per night. Use the code word: "Fire Museum" when booking your reservation.

The Comfort Suites have extended the group rate to those arriving earlier, or staying beyond the seminar's end.

Getting Here

Aurora, IL is located approximately 30 miles west of Chicago. Plan to arrive on Friday evening and depart on Tuesday (assuming you'll be joining us for the Chicago Fire Tour option on Monday). Both O'Hare and Midway Airports conveniently serve Aurora. Rather than renting a car, we suggest taking a taxi to Aurora.



Upon your arrival at either O'Hare or Midway airport, we recommend hiring a suburban taxi for the 45 to 60 minute trip (depending on traffic conditions) to Aurora. We encourage you to arrange for a suburban (as opposed to a City of Chicago taxi) to pick you up at the airport. Once you land, and after you get your luggage, call:

American Taxi
630-305-0700
www.AmericanTaxi.com

or call:

303-Taxi
847-303-0303,
www.303taxi.com

Both companies have competitive rates (\$50 to \$60) and both will meet you outside of the lower-level baggage claim within ten minutes of your telephone call

Come a bit early, or stay a bit longer

Located 37 miles west of Chicago, Aurora is a diverse and vibrant community with a population of 157,000, making it the second largest city in Illinois. Aurora offers savory dining, unique architecture, and numerous museums.

Find out more about Aurora's nationally famous outlet mall, the Hollywood Casino, and the many other things to do in the Aurora Area by visiting the Aurora Area Convention and Visitors Bureau's website:

www.enjoyaurora.com

What Now?

Registration for this year's Fire Museum Seminar, is \$180 and includes: all admission to the seminars, handouts, admission and transportation to area museums, and lunch and dinner on both Saturday and Sunday. If you are a current member (or become a member) of the Fire Museum Network, and if you register BEFORE AUGUST 5th, we will offer a DISCOUNTED REGISTRATION rate of \$150.

For the latest UPDATES on the seminar, hotel, and optional Great Chicago Fire Tour, visit our website:

www.FireMuseumNetwork.org

Still Have Questions?

Contact your seminar hosts at the

Aurora Regional Fire Museum
(630) 892-1572

www.AuroraRegionalFireMuseum.org

Deborah Davis, Executive Director
DDavisARFM@aol.com

David Lewis, Curator
DLewisARFM@aol.com

REGISTRATION FORM

Fire Museum Network Seminar

Aurora, IL • September 6-8th, 2008

Name: _____

Additional name (same museum affiliation): _____

Additional name (same museum affiliation): _____

Affiliated museum: _____

Organization's Mailing address: _____

City: _____ State _____ ZIP _____

E-mail : _____

(please provide to help us confirm your reservation and better communicate with you)

Day phone (____) _____ Alt. phone (____) _____

Are you a current member of the FMN? Yes No

FMN Members AND postmarked by August 5, 2008 _____ **at \$150 each =** _____

Registration, for the Fire Museum Network Seminar (Saturday Sept. 6th & Sunday, Sept. 7th) includes the seminar fees, literature and hand-outs, transportation and admission area museums, and meals on Saturday and Sunday.

Non-Members OR members postmarked after August 5, 2008 .. _____ **at \$180 each =** _____

All attendees are asked to become members of the FMN. This registration fee for the Fire Museum Network Seminar (Saturday Sept. 6th & Sunday, Sept. 7th) INCLUDES all of the above, AND AN ADDITIONAL \$30 ANNUAL FMN MEMBERSHIP.

Great Chicago Fire Tour on Monday (September 8th) _____ **at \$ 60 each =** _____

Registration fee includes transportation into Chicago, guided bus tour of Chicago, literature and hand-outs, and any museum admissions. Lunch is on your own.

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____

your "TO DO" checklist

- Before August 5th — Print this page, complete the form, and mail (with check payable to "AURORA REGIONAL FIRE MUSEUM") to the Aurora Regional Fire Museum - FMN, PO Box 1782, Aurora, IL 60507.
- Before August 5th — Make your hotel reservations at the COMFORT SUITES CITY CENTER located at 111 N. Broadway, Aurora, IL 60505, toll free 866-896-2888. Use the code: "Fire Museum," when booking your reservation for the discount rate of \$113.52 per night
- Make your travel arrangements to arrive on or before Friday (Sept. 5) and depart on or after Tuesday (Sept. 8). Both O'Hare & Midway Airports conveniently serve Aurora. Rather than renting a car, we suggest taking a taxi .

Any questions? Contact your seminar hosts at the Aurora Regional Fire Museum: 630-892-1572

Fire Museum Seminar is a mix of formal presentations, informal discussions, and tours of local fire and non-fire museum sites....



It's **EDUCATIONAL** sessions about both operating a **MUSEUM** and **firefighting history**....

It's for those who are **JUST STARTING** a fire museum, and also those who have *been around for a while*....

It is a time to **LEARN**, and a place to see and hear what dozens of other museums are doing *(or perhaps what they should be doing)*....



It is a chance to **share** problems and solutions, **exchange** ideas and **information**, and *compare* your organization with others....

It's an ***opportunity to network!***



In short, it's... great friends, great food, and a great fun!