

Ralph Reis

Personal interview on May 22, 1991

Ladder 17, located in single house on Harrison Avenue. Responded to the Box Alarm, Stuart and Carver.

Lt. Jeffers, Driver Ralph Reis, Tillerman Jimmy McNeil, sidemen Flannery and Willett. Latter detailed in from Engine 7.

Ladder 17 took position directly in front of the New Lounge on Broadway. Stick to the roof and Reis ventilated. Opened a skylight, with light smoke coming out. Threw ground ladders on Shawmut Street side to tenement house and to the flat roof of the Main Dining Room of the Grove. Attempted vainly to ventilate by opening the rolling roof. Opened a skylight over the Main Dining Room and encountered heavy fire. Returned to Shawmut Street and, for a short period of time operated an unmanned charged handline from unknown company.

States that Rescue 1 was operating a handline just inside doorway, on Shawmut Street, and playing across side of bandstand.

Remainder of time aided in body removal.

While operating at the front of the building, early in the fire, Fred Willett attempted to aid a victim trying to get out through the glass-block window (which had been partially smashed in ) but the victim slid back inside the building and died. Later found that the victim had several other victims laying across the back of his legs. Fred Willett sustained burns on both hands. (Naturally, remained on duty.)