

They struck the third and the cop hollered " it's the Coconut Grove and it's going like Hell" and Gilbert Jones was driving and when we went out the door and down Boylston Street I said to myself "I don't know what the Hell he found out but I might just as well fly out of this goddam seat", he was going so fast. And we went down as far as Stuart Street , right on Stuart Street and into Shawmut Street - the first truck. There's a Chief waiting for us, a District Chief , to this day I don't know who he was- Ladder 15-get a battering ram. We were the ones that knocked down the door, the metal-clad door-inside there were five goddam locks-everyone was different. (Question as to whether Lad. 15 pulled in on Shawmut or Piedmont. Sounds as if they were at the door to the Melody Lounge stairway ???).

We worked like a sonovabitch with the ball (battering ram) and he said "turn it around and use the point and, brother, we had to split that door in every goddam direction and it was unreal.

Question-How long do you figure it took you to open that door?

Probably twenty minutes. Two big guys-I consider that I'm a big guy-I was lighter then than I am now.

Question-Other than Gil Jones driving and you on the tiller, who else was on the truck ?

A guy named Claude Greggs\*, who came from Louisiana-he disappeared- we never saw him working at the fire that night-and a guy by the name of Terence McGovern, I think is passed away, lived in Brighton and, when we went back to quarters there was just me and the driver. Everybody else ended up going to the hospital.

Question; did 33 move on the Box?

33 moved-Captain John Parks was my boss in the fire. I was taking my orders from John Parks .

Question-so when 33 and 15 came in you came straight Boylston?

Boylston to Stuart and then in the Gas Company. We didnt go to Broadway. Right in the back way, because Gilly Jones was driving and wherever he went, I was following.

Question; the Box was Church and Winchester so you would have come in Church St. ? When you came into the street in front of the Grove-

We were at the back of the Grove-we came in the back door- and at the time we were told it was Shawmut Street. We were the ones who knocked down the metal-clad door on Shawmut Street. Now I was taken out of there , I would say, about one hour after we went in . The gas mask wasn't working it was an old Mine Safety All Service, and I was taking people out, body after body, and this District Chief, whoever he was, I never found out who he was. I was taking stuff out and the next thing I knew I came to in the Boston Protective wagon and a Jesuit priest from St. Mary's Church was there and a guy that had a, like an interns coat on . And they had a mask on my face and I don't know what the Hell I was getting whether I was getting Oxygen or not, but I started to come to and the priest said "Here", there was a pint of William Penn, "take a slug of this" and I said 'Father, I don't drink'. He said "Well, you're going to drink now". I said 'No, I don't' and ~~said~~ he said "Well, you're going to have to take a drink" and I said 'Lookit, I don't drink and I never have . So I ended up, I had to have a slug of it and I was ready to throw it up , but it brought me to my senses and I said 'I'm going back' and they said "do you feel all right", I said 'I'm going back in there. There's too many people in there . And when I went back in there, Sam Pope was in there. I became Sam Pope's baby that night cause Sam Pope Said to me "Pat, come with me"

\* LISTED AS 'INJURED', BOST. SUNDAY ADVERTISER 12/6/42.

Now Sam Pope followed me because of the fact that I was on the Dandy Drillers and I was the biggest guy on the Dandy Drillers, and Sam Pope used to go watch us when we went to practice, before Fire Prevention Day each year, he used to go watch us. And he knew me by name and everything. So, Sam would say "Pat, come with me?" and he brought me across the room, this is down in the sub-basement. I took the girl off the piano that was burned at the little piano downstairs. Question; In the Melody Lounge?

In the Melody Lounge. I took her off. Her body disintegrated in my arms. And Sam Pope said "I want you to move some of these tables", there was bodies under them, and I was picking up those iron-based tables and throwing them across the end of the room and the CocaCola type chairs and I had one big pile. I didn't think Sam Pope was watching me as closely as he was so about three or four days after the Grove the Chief's car pulls up in front of the fire station; the next thing I know they ring Captain Seiberts down, then they ring my number and I slide the pole and he said to Seiberts "this has got to be the strongest man in the world". He said "he picked up those iron-based tables and chairs and piled them up". "he carried body after body out". I know I carried a lot of bodies out because a girl by the name of Mary Nolan, I don't know what her married name is, I used to see her down in Scituate, her father had been on Engine 1 and he lost a leg and I was very, very partial to knowing Mary Nolan because she had gone to Boston Teachers and she was working then as the Secretary to the Commanding General of the U.S. Army at the First Army Headquarters at the Cadillac-Olds Building on Commonwealth Avenue. Mary Nolan was looking at the pictures taken by the Army photographer and she said "I know that guy. I've gone out with him". And she said to the General "do you mind if I take these home and show them to Joe" That's what they called me, Joe, because it's Patrick .. Joseph because I didn't like the name Patsy. When I went to school I said I'm not going to be known as Patsy because I had an Uncle Pat on my mother's side and an uncle Pat on my father's side. See, my mother was a Connolly, she came from one part of Galway and my father was a Connolly that came from another part of Galway- no relation. But they met at Hibernian Hall, that's when these kitchen canaries would go out, and my mother worked as a housekeeper for a family, and they'd go out once a week and they'd probably end up at Hibernian Hall and she met my father at Hibernian Hall. ....I worked opposite Dick Kennedy.....8 1/2 hour week.... then there was Captain Broughton, from Brighton, who was sent in to cover the House- at the time I said "I'm going to take a shower". He said, "No, you're not" ..... Jimmy Kinsella got hit by a body jumping from the second floor and he was taken to the hospital.....

Question-If you had a full fifth alarm assignment sitting outside the Grove when it let go, how many people do you think you could have saved????

Answer-( long pause ) I would say if they got in there that is the thing cause we didn't know what we were going into.....

We had a bastard of a time with that door...when we got in the door Captain Parks followed me right in-there were bodies everywhere.....I didn't go on the lower level until after I got back from being in the Protective Wagon and that's when Sam Pope said to me "Pat, I want you to come with me" .....this is the piano you're talking about in the Melody Lounge? That's right, I'm the one who took the body off of that one-Question-She was the piano player? Ans. She was the piano player, the body disintegrated all over me..... ...33 brought a line in once we got the door down because I was on that line for a while with Captain Parks had me laying on the line .....