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JOHN ROSE INTERVIEW-TAPED

First of all: Engine 22, was it a two piece Engine Company?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you have a booster or was it a chemical? A. Booster.

Q. Who, other than you was on the company that night? A. Glynn, Glynn was the Captain. Joe McNeil.

Q. Who was the pump operator? A. I cant remember-John he had a brother over at Fire Prevention, too. I cant remember, it might come to me later. And Bill Este, he went to the hospital with me.

Q. Do you remember who was on the truck? A. There was Lt. Twomey, John O'Malley,uh.

Q. Both compA.anies responded to Stuart and Carver Streets, didnt they? A. That's right.

Q. When you got there who got the first notification-

A. Now when you say 'Stuart and Carver' my knowledge of the Boxes is not too good. What was it- 1521 was the Box? That was what- the Coconut Grove ?1514 was Stuart and Carver.

All right, we went to Stuart and Carver. We had an automobile fire, just an automobile fire . We pulled the Booster and put the fire out. I remember Glynn standing by, watching the whole deal; we had extinguished the fire and were putting the hose back, some civilian came over and said to us, 'there's some smoke coming from the building down here'. So we looked, couldn't really see, but Glynn says "We'll take a ride over". And, of course, that was the Grove.

Now Bill Estey and myself were on the back step and as we approached I could look ahead and I said to Bill "it looks like a couple of sailors having a jam in the doorway". They were pushing and shoving. Then, as we pulled up, they broke free and ran and then the fire came out over their heads. So, of course everything broke loose then. We dropped a big line off at a hydrant-I don't remember whether it was a high pressure hydrant or not, I don't remember that. But I know we dropped a big line off. Joe McNeil was on the pump, and we ran a short line-the hydrant was real close and we ran to a doorway, ah, and there was still a jam in the doorway-some people were breaking free and running, so we couldn't get in, obviously, and with the fire coming out over their heads we played in over the top of the doorway and into the area behind- we knew there was a lot of fire in there. Course we had no idea how many people were involved but, we saw the fire and we did what was obvious. We played the line in and then there seemed to be a slacking off on the activity. See, these people now were being overcome, they were being injured, burned and, eventually, the whole thing started- we shut our line down or passed it back, I don't know, we got rid of that, and we went in and started to take some people out of the doorway.

Q. When you were playing that line in there I was wondering whether you were just hitting the interior of that vestibule?

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A. Oh yeah, we didn't get in too far because this door swung in and beyond that was the cloak room and, I think' the Men's Room.

Q. Now, was Engine 35 first due into that car fire? They didn't get a Booster line on the car fire ?

A. No, we did. We had it on the still. As far as I can recollect we got there and there was nobody else there so we went to work on the fire. I remember fairly well because I was on watch. I had just taken over the 9 to 12 watch and, uh, when this came in.

Q. Now Engine 35 came in after you, and so did Engine 7 at the automobile fire, and I would assume that Stickel was the Deputy and Crowley was the District Chief. Were the District and Deputies cars radio equipped ? Do you remember?

A. I know thge Deputies cars were.

Q. You and Estes dropped a line, I don't care where the pump was, no doubt the pump was behind you, but where was your wagon placed? Where did you start running your line from ? Right in front of the building from the Broadway side? so you would have been the closest company to that door?

A. The wagon was stopped opposite the door, because you couldn't see anything so we went up to where we could. And then we ran a line from there, and I think it was a post hydrant, now that I'm thinking about it, uh, we couldn't have been more than a couple hundred feet away, short line, because we ran it, you know- we had first water on the fire, unless somebody came in from the next block-

Q. When Myles Murphy, who was on the Rescue- he went in the same door you were at, did he go in over your line, or was it another line? Cause he was alone, or he had one man with him.

A. Well, I don't know if anyone could have gone in. After ten or fifteen minutes we were still pulling bodies out of there. And you couldn't get by, I say, us, because the bodies were piled right up to the ceiling and we were taking them out and passing them behind us, and, every once in a while you'd find one that was groaning, most of them were burned pretty badly, uh, it was amazing. You know how little things stick out in your mind, I remeber right in that area when we knocked down as much fire as we could, put the line down and went in and started pulling these people out, passing them out, see, and that pile of bodies was right up, pretty close to the ceiling where they had come down the corridor on the left, theres a floor plan here that would illustrate

Q. Was Mike Sheehan detailed to Engine 22 or Ladder 13?

A. I don't think we had a detailed man.-----It took us a good half hour, I'd say, to get from there to here (meaning across the Broadway Lounge) because the bodies were piuled and intertwined, one was laying on the other and, you know, and there was still a lot of heat and smoke.

[Indicates, on question that most of the bodies were concentrated to the left of vestibule, at front end of the Broadway Lounge] We were playing a line in there, and we couldn't even get in there because of the heat. And yet

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there were people in there, see, and they were in there and first off they were hollering and screaming, moaning, and then there were no moans at all. So when Estey and I were playing in there and I remember, funny, a man came out of the darkness and he was all on fire. These are the things that stick out in your mind. He wasn't all on fire then, but he came out this way with his hands extended and I reached in to take hold of him and then he went on fire. He just puffed right up and I couldn't hold him and he fell back into the fire and then we continued on. And then we were ordered down around back here, ah, and we went in through here, and, I got over near, close to the Bar in the cocktail lounge and there was still a tremendous number of bodies in here where apparently they had come from here [indicating corridor from Main Dining Room to Broadway Lounge] down the corridor, the jam was here and they couldn't get out and they milled around here and that is what it was.

Q. Now you had your own truck working with you, Ladder 13 backed you up; do you remember the placement of any of the other companies? Where they were working? A. I never looked. Q. I was wondering because reportedly there were 27 hand lines run?

A. Once I got there I never left the building until I was carried out. Uh, Ladder 13 had a ladder to the roof here, uh, a straight ladder, and they took off the chorus girls and Jimmy Kinsella, an excellent firefighter and a nice guy, too. Hearsay, he carried a couple of people down the ladder, got hit by someone jumping, knocked out, and came to in the garage where they were piling up the dead [on Piedmont Street]. Ladder 13 broke in the glass block of the Broadway Lounge.

Q. Did you, with the experience you have had over the course of the years notice anything in the smoke that smelled funny to you?

A. Not unusual.

Q. Maybe whatever was in it had burned out of it?

A. I'd say, to my knowledge, there was nothing unusual about the smoke that you wouldn't have found in any other place, even a dwelling house. In here, too [referring to the official bfd Report] is the analysis of the smoke... No, now we had no masks, any one of us working in there; course, if you remember, I know on 22, if you took a mask off the truck and put it on you'd get fired! The Rescue Company was the only one because if we advanced a line into a building and the smoke was really rough and we were taking a beating, we'd say "let Rescue take it".

Q. Sure, you'd give up your line to the Rescue; like Hell you would.

A. Long, deep chuckle.

END OF TAPE