



# THE HOUSEWATCH

NOVEMBER 2022

## CURATOR'S CORNER

by Sean Britton

This month I would like to highlight one of the gems in our incredible collection: Engine 246, a Type 75 American LaFrance pumper. This apparatus was found in a barn in 1969 in upstate New York and lovingly restored by Bob Cerullo, a lieutenant in the Auxiliary Fire Corps, his father, Vin Cerullo Sr., and Sandy Sansevero, then a lieutenant with Ladder 4. It is the only FDNY Type 75 known to still exist.

The Type 75 was the principal apparatus bought to replace horse-drawn pumpers, and from 1917 through the late 1920's almost every Engine Company was equipped with one. Most remained in service through the mid 1930's, with several used as spare rigs until the mid 1940's. This particular Engine went into service with Engine 246 on October 20th, 1921 and remained with the Company until July 18th, 1931. It was used as a spare until being disposed of in November 1938.



When the restoration process began, the trio had no idea that their barn find had been used by the FDNY. After several layers of paint had been removed, “FDNY 246” emerged in large gold leaf lettering. Ironically, Engine 246 was located just minutes away from where they were restoring the rig! The restoration process was tedious, as the rig had lost many parts over the years. Parts were sourced from all over the country (quite difficult in the days before the internet!) as well as handmade around New York City.

After the restoration was completed in 1972, Bob, Vin, and Sandy entered it in parades and competitions, winning many awards for its uniqueness and amazing restoration. They also used it to raise money for several charities and volunteer fire departments. It was even used to chauffeur a firefighter to his wedding!

In October of 2005, it was generously donated to the New York City Fire Museum, where it remains as a centerpiece in the first-floor gallery.

