



# Cleveland Firefighters Shamrock Club

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **SUBJECT: 2017 MEMORIAL TO FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS**

The Cleveland Firefighters Shamrock Club will host the annual Memorial to Fallen Firefighters at the Firefighters Memorial located at the corner of Erieside Avenue and Lerner Way. The service is held annually on March 17<sup>th</sup>. This year it will begin at 11:25 A.M. prior to the St. Patrick's Day Parade. The memorial honors our Fallen Brother Firefighters, the bravest of the brave, who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the performance of their duties. Seventy-seven Firefighters have died in the line of duty since 1863 with the first being Paul N. Aukens on February 25, 1869 and the last, Captain Rich Nickels who passed away April 3, 2012.

The Shamrock Club is honored to announce the presentation of the wreath this year will be made by family members of the late Cleveland Firefighter Lieutenant Edwin J. Hart of Engine Company 3. Lieutenant Hart died on August 13, 1963 from injuries sustained after an explosion at the Avis Truck Fire located at 1204 Carnegie Avenue S.W. Lieutenant Hart was not the only Cleveland Firefighter killed from this explosion. Along with Lt. Hart, Firefighter John T. McKenna of Engine Company 14 was killed instantly on the day of the explosion. Firefighter Robert Jones of Engine Company 3 died two days later on August 15, 1963 and Firefighter Robert L Marquard of Engine Company 3 died on September 1, 1963 from injuries sustained in the blast. Lieutenant Hart was 65 years old at the time of his death. He was the beloved husband to Mary, the father of Irene, James, twins Marilyn and Marianne, and Elizabeth. Lt Hart's son James was a Cleveland Firefighter at the time of his father's death. Fireman James Hart retired in 1988 and passed away in 2012. Lt. Hart's daughter Marilyn is the wife of 31 years to retired Battalion Chief Joseph Vassel.

The Cleveland Firefighters Shamrock Club is a Society of Irish Firefighters officially established in 1980. The membership is made up of City of Cleveland Firefighters and Cleveland Airport Firefighters. The Memorial to Fallen Firefighters began in 1982 and was the creation of the late Shamrock Club member Battalion Chief George O'Neil. The Shamrock Club is a member of the United Irish Societies of Greater Cleveland, which is an organization of Irish-American groups that presents the St. Patrick's Day Parade each year.