



# MICHIGAN FIREHOUSE MUSEUM & EDUCATION CENTER

110 W. Cross St. Ypsilanti, MI 48197 734.547.0663  
[www.michiganfirehousemuseum.org](http://www.michiganfirehousemuseum.org)



Tues-Sat 10 to 4 Sun 12 to 4 Closed Mon Adults \$5 2 to 16 \$3 Under 2 Free

## NEWSLETTER APR - MAY - JUN 2012

### Union City Ladder Truck by Matt Lee

Shown at right is the restored Ladder truck from the Village of Union City, Michigan.

The Village of Union City is a community of 1,800 that straddles Branch and Calhoun Counties in the Southwestern part of the state, at the union of the St. Joseph and Coldwater rivers. The village is just a few miles from Battle Creek, Michigan. Founded in 1866, with adequate water power available for grain and saw mills, it was a relatively prosperous community. The Village ordered a hose cart and this ladder truck in 1910, from American LaFrance.

This ladder truck was hand pulled and carried three heavy ladders plus a collection of firefighting equipment. The ladders were various lengths as marked at the base of the ladder. The longest and heaviest ladder was placed at the most convenient height for unloading; no bending or stretching involved. The rig also carried buckets marked with the names of the volunteers of the department.

Often called hook and ladder trucks, these rigs carried a pair of small hooks with chains that could be slung over the peak of steep roofed houses or houses with tin roofs. With this firm attachment it would be easy to climb the incline of often slippery roofs. The second style hook had a few feet of chain and a stout rope attached. It could be placed on a burning object (like a burning car in a garage) and the object could be pulled out of the way. The large wheels were to aid in navigating the rutted roads of the day. The kerosene torch mounted at the front/top of the rig could be used at night to light the fire scene.

A special thank you is due to the Fire Department and the people of the Village of Union City for the gift of the ladder truck and a matching hose cart. Restoration of the hose cart is starting now and will be on display at the Michigan Firehouse Museum soon.



### A Photographer's Delight

Jeff Thomas and his professional photography class visited the Museum this spring and found it to be a visual treasure trove, both inside and out.

By happenstance his class was shooting various sites throughout the Ypsilanti area one afternoon when they discovered the old firehouse tower. They quickly decided to come back later and spend an entire morning at the Museum, taking pictures.

Shown at left is one of the subjects photographed; the radiator cap/water temperature gauge located on the Museum's 1920 American LaFrance.