

Contact: Bobby Wolfe
Phone: (620) 441-4430
Fax: (620) 441-0238
bwolfe@arkansascityks.gov

Fire-EMS Department
City of Arkansas City
115 South D St.
Arkansas City, KS 67005



News Release

Hallmark visits Ark City to prepare for 2018 fire truck ornament

Arkansas City Fire-EMS Department's 1932 Buick to join Fire Brigade series

ARKANSAS CITY, Kan. (February 8, 2017) — Representatives from Hallmark Keepsake Ornaments were in Arkansas City on Tuesday morning to film, measure and photograph a historic fire engine.

The visit was part of an almost two-year-long process to turn the Arkansas City Fire-EMS Department's 1932 Buick fire engine into a collectible holiday ornament.

"We are very excited about featuring this unique and beautiful fire engine as an upcoming ornament in our 'Fire Brigade' series," said Michael Brush, editorial strategist for Hallmark Keepsake Ornaments.

The Buick will be released in mid-2018 as part of that year's ornament series.

Keepsake artist Robert Hurlburt accompanied Brush on the trip to Arkansas City to take the photos and measurements that he will need to start sculpting the miniature ornament.

The eighth fire engine in the Fire Brigade series was modeled after a 1951 Ford fire engine from Leawood. Every year since, they've tried to find a truck with some kind of interesting background.

The Buick's history — it started life as a burned-out robbery getaway car — was a perfect fit.

Brush and Hurlburt were met Tuesday by City Manager Nick Hernandez, Fire Chief Bobby Wolfe, ACFD Capt. Chet Ranzau and former city commissioner Jean Snell, who helped to restore the Buick.

Director Jennifer Dreiling and cameraman Jake Johnson, with the Hallmark Photography Studio, accompanied the team and filmed the entire visit for an exclusive production video on the Keepsake Ornament Club collectors' website.

The team also recorded audio of the Buick's siren and bell. One of those sounds might be included as part of the ornament design, to be heard when a button is pressed.

For immediate release

more

In what Brush said was a first for the Hallmark crew, they even had a chance to ride in the engine on a short tour of Arkansas City, with ACFD Firefighter-Paramedic Cody Ball in the driver's seat.

"I think your engine will make a really stunning ornament and I am positive that our 'Fire Brigade' series collectors will love it as much as I do," Brush said.

He said he learned about the Buick five years ago while doing internet research for future projects.

In the next month or so, Hurlburt will start sculpting the ornament digitally. Next, a model will be "grown" on a 3-D printer so that the intricate details can be added by hand.

Once it is finished and painted, the resulting model will be reviewed by the Keepsake Ornaments leadership team to make sure it is up to the series' standards before it finally is approved for manufacturing.

Once all of those steps are completed, production could start late this year or early next spring.

The ornaments are expected to arrive at authorized Hallmark Gold Crown stores in July 2018 and they also will be available for purchase online at www.hallmark.com.

From getaway car to fire truck

The 1932 Buick Rag Top was stolen and used in a bank robbery that year. Afterward, the robbers set the car on fire.

The City of Arkansas City purchased the burned-out car from the insurance company in early 1932.

The restoration work of the burned vehicle was completed by local firefighters. The back section of the car was replaced with the bed of a 1909 Kissle, the first motorized fire truck in Arkansas City.

Prior to the Kissle, horse-drawn wagons were used to fight fires in Ark City.

The truck was fitted with a 500-gallon-per-minute pump and 100-gallon water tank, and was equipped to carry 900 feet of 2 1/2-inch hose and ladders.

The 1932 Buick fire truck served the City of Arkansas City for 16 years before it was sold in the early 1950s. But a telephone call to the Ark City fire chief in 1991 informed the department not only of the location of the old truck, but that it also was for sale.

The old truck was purchased with donations from area businesses and citizens for \$2,250. It was returned back to Arkansas City on a flatbed trailer in very poor condition and in several pieces.

more

Once again, the 1932 Buick was restored by the firefighters of the Arkansas City Fire-EMS Department, a process that took several years, with the help of passionate citizens such as Snell.

Fire Brigade series

The 1932 Buick Rag Top will be the 16th installment in Hallmark Keepsake Ornaments' Fire Brigade series. Previous entries by artists Chris Webb (2003-2007) and Hurlburt (2010-present) include:

1. 2003 release — 1929 Chevrolet Fire Engine
2. 2004 release — American LaFrance 700 Series Pumper
3. 2005 release — 1938 Chevrolet Fire Engine
4. 2006 release — 1961 GMC Fire Engine
5. 2007 release — 1988 Ford C8000
6. 2008 release — 1908 Ford Model T
7. 2009 release — 1965 Chevrolet Fire Engine
8. 2010 release — 1951 Ford Fire Engine (Leawood, Kansas)
9. 2011 release — 1957 Chevrolet Fire Engine (Fredericksburg, Pennsylvania)
10. 2012 release — 1936 Ford Fire Engine (Lemoore, California)
11. 2013 release — 1941 Ford Fire Engine (Talladega, Alabama)
12. 2014 release — 1971 GMC Fire Engine (Mosby, Missouri)
13. 2015 release — 1956 Ford Fire Engine (Greenwood, Indiana)
14. 2016 release — 1959 GMC Fire Engine (Bedford Park, Illinois)
15. 2017 release — not yet announced

Other ornaments in the Hallmark Keepsake Ornaments Fire Brigade series may be viewed and purchased at www.hookedonhallmark.com/Fire-Brigade_c_108.html, www.ornament-shop.com/Fire-Brigade-s162.html or www.hallmarkornaments.com/hallmark-ornaments-by-series/fire-brigade.

For more information about Hurlburt, visit explore.hallmark.com/keepsake-ornaments/artists/robert-hurlburt. For more information about the Keepsake Ornament Club and other resources for collectors, visit explore.hallmark.com/keepsake-ornaments/keepsake-ornament-club.

###