

Aspen Fire Protection District



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Historical Marble Headstone to Honor W.W. Cornell, Aspen's Fire Assistant Chief from the Late 1800s

ASPEN, COLORADO - In a remarkable tribute to history, a marble headstone sourced from Marble, Colorado will be placed in honor of W.W. Cornell, fondly known as "Corney", who served diligently as Aspen's Fire Assistant Chief in the late 1800s and early 1900s. This act of remembrance comes over 120 years after Chief Cornell's tragic passing in 1902.

A ceremony for this occasion will take place at **Red Butte Cemetery on October 16, 2023 at 2 pm**

This initiative took root when Jake Andersen, serving as Battalion Chief for Roaring Fork Fire Rescue, happened upon a significant historical artifact at a yard sale in Willits, CO in 2018. The journal, priced modestly at \$1, belonged to none other than W.W. Cornell. The yard sale was hosted by Buzz Patten, a longtime member of Mountain Rescue Aspen, whose father had preserved this valuable piece of history. At the time of purchase, Andersen had no knowledge of the journal's origin, other than it belonged to a resident of Aspen in the late 1800s. The discovery of its association with a former Aspen firefighter came through Andersen's wife. In an almost poetic turn of events, upon Jake Andersen's appointment as the Deputy Chief of Operations for the Aspen Fire Department, he presented the journal to the board of directors, echoing the rich legacy and interwoven destinies of these two individuals.

Denis Murray, a board member of the Aspen Fire Department, delved deeper into this connection and unearthed that Chief Cornell had held the very same esteemed position as Andersen in the late 1800s. "It's not just about commemorating a past firefighter's service," said Andersen, "but also about recognizing the threads of history that connect us all. Finding this journal was serendipitous, and learning about its origin was a powerful reminder of the legacy that we inherit and carry forward." The placement of the marble headstone is a significant gesture, cementing the connection between the past and present, and ensuring that the legacy of W.W. Cornell is not only remembered but also celebrated.

For more information, please contact 970-925-5532

About Aspen Fire Department

The Aspen Fire Department has a rich history of serving the community and ensuring the safety and well-being of its residents. Our mission is to "Protect our community and environment by providing education, prevention and response through professional excellence." Our number value is "People". Those who serve and those we serve. Join us at www.aspenfire.com.