



William Morin

William (Sonny) Morin was born March 6, 1912 and joined the Ottawa Fire Department April 8, 1936. Fireman William Morin had been home sick for a week prior to his return to duty on Monday January 29, 1941. At 10:47 a.m. that morning Number 2 and 7 stations were dispatched to 1231 Wellington Street to fight a chimney fire. Responding to the incident with the two stations was Deputy Chief Burnett who became curious as to why Number 7 had not reached the fire scene. Once Number 2 station was on scene he backtracked towards Number 7 station. On his way back he came upon the accident and was informed that Fireman Morin had been crushed against the telegraph pole.

The pumper was responding and the roads were icy, so the pumper was equipped with tire chains. The pumper started to skid and went into a spin and the wheel chain went into an icy streetcar rail, the truck was thrown into the telegraph pole. Fireman Morin suffered serious head and internal injuries and died shortly before 11 a.m. that morning.

Firemen and citizens aided in extricating the faintly breathing fireman from the wreckage. Lieutenant Paul (Buck) Sarazin noting the dire condition of the victim ran to a nearby church Our Lady of Perpetual Help and summoned Father John O'Neil to the scene. The last rites of the church were administered to on the icy sidewalk while Fireman Steve Hillman held his fellow fireman in his arms. Frantic calls were being put in for an ambulance but Fireman Morin died a few minutes later and his body was taken directly to the McElvoy Funeral Home. He was the tenth fireman to lose his life as a direct result of performing his firefighting duties. Fireman Morin was one of the most popular men on the Department. He was an accomplished singer and tap dancer and comedian. He was very well known both off and on the Department. His death threw an air of gloom over the entire Department. The other Fireman on the tailboard that day was Ebert Dicks whose life was saved when he jumped from the pumper only seconds prior to it hitting the telephone pole.

Fire Chief James O'Kelly stated that there was no negligence on the part of driver Steven Hillman a twenty-year veteran of the Department involved in the accident, Due to the road conditions and the fact that the pumper was not driving a high rate of speed. He noted that he himself along with many Ottawa resident had similar experiences with streetcar tracks.

