



2019 Ceremony Commemorating the Exchange of the Silver Speaking Trumpet | Photo by Mike Kovaliv

Silver Speaking Trumpet

A symbol of the long and cordial relationship between the Detroit Fire Department and the Windsor Fire Department.

The Detroit Fire Department assisted in fighting a terrible fire in Windsor on April 16, 1849. The *Amherstburg Courier and Western District Advertiser* recounted, "The fire bells were rung in Detroit, and the whole of their Engines, and all the Firemen... landed at Windsor..." (April 21, 1849).

Much of what is now downtown Windsor was saved due to the diligence of the Detroit Fire Department, and in thanks, the inhabitants of Windsor presented the Detroit Fire Department with a silver speaking trumpet.

In July of 1967, the Windsor Fire Department returned the favour, assisting with fighting the fires set during the Detroit Riots / Rebellion.

The François Baby House, now part of Museum Windsor, was a close neighbour to the great fire of 1849. Alan Douglas, author of *Mansion to Museum*, and the first curator of the museum, says, "Baby's gratitude to the Detroit Firemen was such that at a public meeting on April 17 he moved that they be presented with

a silver speaking trumpet. Those in attendance were inspired by the idea, and a total of \$84.00 was pledged on the spot..."

Windsor citizens presented the engraved ceremonial trumpet to the Detroit Fire Department in July, 1849.

On April 16, 1969, a ceremony to commemorate the 1849 fire and the historic friendship between the Windsor and Detroit fire departments, was held on the Ambassador Bridge at the international boundary line.

In 2019, representatives from Windsor and Detroit gathered again to celebrate 170 years of history and continued bond with our friends in Detroit. The speaking trumpet featured prominently in



Commemoration Ceremony, 1969
Photo from windsorfire.com

this ceremony, before heading to the François Baby House to be placed on display as part of a mini exhibition.



The Silver Speaking Trumpet, 2019
Collection of the Detroit Historical Society