

THE REGISTER

March 2020 - Spring

MILWAUKEE FIRE HISTORICAL
SOCIETY
1615 W. Oklahoma Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53215
414-286-5272

Information and
news about the
activities of the
Milwaukee Fire
Historical Society
and the Fire

Milwaukee Fire Historical Society

Car 3 - 1958 Edsel

After recently completing the beautiful restoration of old Engine 9, we were surprised with a donation of a 1958 Ford Edsel. This vehicle was originally assigned to the Firefighting Deputy Chief (Car 3). It was one of three Edsel's operated by the MFD. The cars served in various capacities from May 1958 until February, 1964. See Page 2 and 3 for photos and information.

While we never planned on such a major gift so soon after the "49 Mack restoration, it is rare if ever, that a vintage vehicle gets dropped in our lap. Perhaps someday, we will be able to restore this Edsel into a beautiful, drivable piece of Milwaukee Fire Department history.

There are several individuals and organizations who have taken a keen interest in this car in the hopes that it will be restored some day.

Two Edsel organizations are very interested in the car, the national Edsel Owners Group and Wisconsin Edsel Club. Available to lend his expertise is one of the leading authorities on Edsel restorations, Harvey Woebeking, President of the Wisconsin Edsel Club.

In addition we are very pleased to be consulting with world famous auto restoration expert, Milwaukee's own, Dan Bennett from Bennett Coachworks

Work is in progress on a number of promotional and fundraising activities over the next year. If you know any individuals or businesses that would be interested in supporting, sponsoring or have any ideas or suggestions, please contact Randy Leach at 414-630-5777.

Car 3, 1958 Edsel Returns to Milwaukee for the First Time Since 1964!



Car 3 loaded up and ready to leave its temporary storage in Hartford. Thank you to retired HEO **Rodney Raasch** for storing it for the last few months.

Transportation provided by **Ray's Towing**.
Always a wonderful supporter of the Fire Museum!

Heading south back to Milwaukee.



Finally, back at the Fire Museum!

January 23, 2020

Thank you to the crew from **Ray's Towing** and **Engine 12** for moving Car 3 thru the snow and ice.

Ray's Towing
Doug and Luke

Engine 12 Crew
A/Lt., FF Thadeus Wagner
HEO Matt Gordon
FF Mandy Herriges
FF Calvin Rivera





Restoration of Car 3 - 1958 Edsel

Fire apparatus have had a long and storied history on the Milwaukee Fire Department. This Edsel was Car 3, the Fire Fighting Deputy. It was one of three owned by Milwaukee Fire Department and in service for six years. We recently acquired this old workhorse and hopefully this gem can be restored to its original luster, beauty and style.

*Please consider helping restore this piece of Milwaukee firefighting history.
Donations to the:*

**Milwaukee Fire Historical Society and Fire Museum
Car 3 Restoration Fund**

1615 W. Oklahoma Ave.

Milwaukee WI 53215-4539

Questions? Contact Randy Leach, Treasurer, 414-630-5777

The Society is a non-profit 501-c-3 organization

Sponsorship is also available

Cut Here

First Name _____ Last Name _____

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\$10 () \$25 () \$50 () \$100 () Other _____

Museum Open House Dates

The **Milwaukee Fire Museum** will be closed in February and March, 2020. We will reopen on the first Sunday of each Month, beginning in April, **12:00 P.M. to 3:00 P.M.**, except holidays.

To schedule a private or group tour of the **Fire Museum** other than scheduled Open House dates, call 414-286-5272.

Museum Updates and Improvements

During the winter closing, a number of updates and improvements are in the works. A large screen TV and sound bar will be installed for improved presentation capabilities, a vast improvement over the old projector and screen days.



We are also evaluating a new lighting design for the dorm-presentation room. Lastly, a new display is planned for the “old dorm” north wall. We will keep it a surprise for now, but you will be impressed the next time you come to visit us in April.

Donations to assist in the many projects of the Milwaukee Fire Historical Society and the Milwaukee Fire Museum are always appreciated. Contact any Board Member!

Local 215 Installation of Officers

Congratulations to the Executive officers and board members of Local 215 being sworn in by Milwaukee County Sheriff

Earnell Lucas.

The board of the *Milwaukee Fire Historical Society* would like to thank Local 215 for the invitation to the January installation of officers.



Congratulations to **Jennifer Schaefer, Joe Haasch, Aaron Kreil, John Kokalj, Eric Daun, Mike Bongiorno, Bill Code, Rob Bland, Ben Holdmann, Alan Bykowski, Brigid Condon, Brent Jones.**

Milwaukee Fire Bell Club Installation of Officers

Congratulations to the new officers of the Milwaukee Fire Bell Club being sworn in by MFD Assistant Chief Aaron Lipski.

(L to R), **Bob Domrois**, Director. **Annie Hermsen** Director,, **Bob Warner**, Secretary, **Bob Ristic**, Vice President and **Doug Hanke**, President. Not pictured, **Ron Hornik**, Director and **Chris Callen**, Treasurer.



A big thank you to the Fire Bell Club for all they do to support the Milwaukee Fire Department!

Milwaukee Retired Fire and Police Association

Congratulations to Retired Captain Al Jansen for taking on the his new role as Secretary of the Milwaukee Retired Fire and Police Association. Al has always worked for the best interests of the members.

Thank you Al for your continued commitment.



***Milwaukee Fire Historical Society Welcomes:
Brew City F.O.O.L.S
Fraternal Order Of Leatherheads Society
Wednesday, February 26th, 2020
06:30 PM***

Training provided by the Milwaukee Fire Historical Society. Critique on tactics employed on past Milwaukee Incidents with historical perspective.

A unique power point program will be presented by MFHS board members Krueger and Ski asking the question:

“Are todays firefighters putting tactics ahead of strategies?”

Brew City F.O.O.L.S. provides training opportunities to Brother and Sister firefighters worldwide and try to keep the Duty, Pride, and Tradition of the fire service alive.

Milwaukee Fire Historical Society Welcomes:

Wisconsin Edsel Club

Spring Banquet, Noon, Sunday, April 5, 2020

The Milwaukee Fire Historical Society welcomes 35 members of the ***Wisconsin Edsel Club*** for their Spring Banquet and meeting. The Wisconsin Edsel Club is very interested in our vintage car and we look forward to them sharing their expertise and assistance.

MFHS is proud to display our Fire Museum and our beautifully restored fire apparatus and is eager to share the rich history, heritage and traditions of the Milwaukee Fire Department.

Support the
Milwaukee Fire Historical Society!

When you shop at smile.amazon.com

Amazon donates.

Go to smile.amazon.com



Air Travel, Airports and Accidents

Deputy Chief Warren Skonieczny, (Ret.)

In many of the past issues of *The Register*, we have highlighted some of Milwaukee's major fires occurring over the course of many years. These incidents usually made a big splash in the local headlines, sometimes lasting on for days. One subject we rarely discuss or possibly even remember, involve some of the major aircraft accidents that have happened in our area. Perhaps many of you remember the crash of Midwest Flight 105 shortly after takeoff back in 1985. Aside from this, it's hard to recall very many mishaps, if any at all.

This article traces back, not all, but some of those accidents that made the news of the day. All of the incidents occurred in the Milwaukee area and most required the services of the Milwaukee Fire Department. In addition to these accounts, I have provided a brief narrative on the evolution of commercial air travel in Milwaukee along with a concise account chronicling the beginnings of its airports.

Commercial Airline Travel

Over the course of modern history, commercial airline travel is a relatively new phenomenon. If we look back, none of this happened in earnest until 1903 with the Wright Brothers being credited with the first sustained, controlled and powered flight. Since then, we've been to the moon, traveled on supersonic transports, have a space station and are currently developing Mach 5 (five times the speed of sound) hypersonic aircraft.

In the history of commercial aviation there is evidence of gradual evolution – from stunt plane and site seeing passenger flights to flying airboats flying just a few feet above the water to examples of modern air travel involving regularly scheduled overland air service using land-based runways. The first scheduled commercial airline flight conducted in the United States occurred on 01 January, 1914 for the St. Petersburg-Tampa Airboat Line. From then it's never looked back.

1926 was a watershed year for commercial aviation. It would be one of many key milestones, and the year of what has been referred to as the *first true* commercial

passenger flight in the United States. By the end of the 1950's, airlines were bringing a new level of speed, comfort and efficiency to the traveling public. However, along with these great aeronautical achievements came the inevitable: accidents, mishaps and disasters.

Early airfields and airports grew from the use of airplanes for military, agricultural, airmail, and aerial observation purposes. Equipped with grass or dirt runways, they were not pleasant places for the early passengers. Many of these airfields originated as a result of the airmail system created in the United States just after World War I.

It was Charles Lindbergh's solo flight across the Atlantic in 1927 that not only electrified the public but also encouraged the development of airports. Local officials and business leaders recognized the increased visibility and the new businesses and tourists that could result from modern airport facilities and airline traffic.

The business communities and ordinary citizens all contributed thousands of dollars to build airfields, hangars, and maintenance, office, and storage buildings. After World War II, it was recognized that airports would need longer runways for heavier and faster planes, more runways and taxiways to handle more and more, and larger passenger terminals. Milwaukee, like other major cities, followed suit.

Maintland Field

Imagine flying an open-cockpit airplane across Lake Michigan. It is January 1933 and you fly the "Bridge Across Lake Michigan" route for Kohler Aviation Corporation. The company flew the route four times daily, 12 months a year. The airline had been flying passengers and express between Milwaukee and Grand Rapids, Michigan, since September 1, 1929.



As one mode of transportation fell out of favor, another came into vogue. In 1926, just after having established Hamilton Airfield on the southern reaches of the city (then known as Mitchell Field), the county board determined that Milwaukee would best be

served by a series of airfields surrounding the city – not unlike the various train depots, the centerpiece of these airfields serving as a major passenger conduits to downtown and as a delivery point for airmail servicing the area.

In 1927, a new lakefront airport was officially dedicated as Maintland Field, in honor of Milwaukee native Lester Maitland, who had just set a world record for flying from California to Hawaii in 26 hours. Pilots using his namesake field, needed to be nearly as daring. The narrow runways, the wicked lake squalls, and the uneven surfaces were major impediments to the field becoming a popular landing stop. In 1930, the federal government ruled that Maintland's runways were too narrow for safe usage and traffic into the area almost stopped completely.

In 1937, still convinced of the eventual need for a downtown airport, the city estimated it would take another 15 million cubic yards of fill and at least 20 years of work to bring Maintland up to code. Meanwhile, the new Milwaukee Seadrome had been established on the site, a facility specializing in the storage of seaplanes and doubling as a training school for seaplane pilots. The downtown location was one of only six schools in the nation where civilians could receive seaplane training. The "runway" of the Seadrome was the lake, an east-to-west strip of the lake between the airfield and the breakwater wall.

The Seadrome operated until 1947. The following year, the city and the Civil Aeronautics Association each invested more than \$200,000 in upgrading the field with the hopes of again using it for passenger planes. But the airport still proved to be a difficult sell for visiting pilots. It remained little used until 1956 when it was finally abandoned and the land was leased to the Army. Today the area is internationally known as the Summerfest grounds.

Mitchell Field

Milwaukee formally entered the aviation era on July 3, 1919, when it established the first county-operated airport, named Butler Airport, located on the northwest side, the current site of James Currie Park and Golf Course. Around the same time, Thomas Hamilton, a local aviator who operated a propeller manufacturing business and small airport, also built an airport in the Town of Lake in 1920.

On 05 October, 1926, the Milwaukee County Board approved the \$150,000 to purchase Hamilton's land for a new airport facility and abruptly renamed it

“Milwaukee County Airport.” Soon after the Hamilton land purchase, aviation activity at the Currie Park site ceased and was transferred to the new location.

The old Hirschbuehl Farmhouse, was the first airport terminal used there and opened in July 1927. Later that month, Northwest Airlines, Inc., began air service from Milwaukee to Chicago and to Minneapolis/St. Paul. In August 1927, world-renowned aviator Charles Lindbergh visited the Milwaukee airport. Kohler Aviation Corporation also began providing passenger service across Lake Michigan on August 31, 1929.

During the late depression years (from 1938 to July 1940), a new two-story passenger terminal building was constructed by the Works Progress Administration (WPA). On March 17, 1941 the airport was renamed “General Mitchell Field” after Milwaukee's military airpower advocate, Brigadier General William "Billy" Mitchell. On January 4, 1945, Mitchell Field was leased to the War Department for use as a World War II prisoner-of-war camp. Over 3,000 German prisoners and 250 U.S. troops stayed at the work camp. Escaped German prisoners were often surprised to find a large German American population just beyond the fence.

Shortly after the completion of the first terminal and through the early 1950's, the airport experienced growth in the number of flight operations, including the large four-engine propeller-driven Boeing Strati-Cruisers and Lockheed Constellations. Heavy congestion at the east Layton Avenue terminal building location, lead to construction on a larger terminal facility to be located on Howell Avenue

On July 19, 1955, at a cost of \$3.2 million, a new three-concourse, two-level structure opened with a capacity of 23 aircraft gates. The airfield then included 1,530 acres of land for runways and taxiways. Milwaukee entered the jet age in July of 1961 with the arrival of a Northwest Orient Airlines Boeing 720 four-engine jet (similar to a Boeing 707 jet).

The terminal was renovated and expanded once again in 1985. In keeping with the new appearance of the airport and its increased national recognition, a new name was also appropriate. On June 19, 1986, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors officially renamed the airport "General Mitchell International Airport," also reflecting the presence of the United States Customs Service on site.

The airport is also home to the 128th Air Refueling Wing (ARW), Wisconsin Air National Guard (AND). This unit flies the KC-135 Stratotanker, which serves dual roles

both as an in-flight air refueler, and cargo plane. The air base occupies the south-eastern area of the airport property.

The ANG, is a federal military reserve force as well as the militia air force of each U.S. state. The Guard's federal mission is to maintain well-trained, well-equipped units available for prompt mobilization during war and provide assistance during national emergencies. Both full-time active Guard and Reserve components are available for worldwide deployment.

Prior to 2007, a second military installation on the southwestern portion of the airport property was known as "General Mitchell Air Reserve Station". It was home to the 440th Air Reserve Wing (AW), flying C-130 cargo planes. The Reserves mission statement is somewhat more direct than that of the Guard's which simply states: to provide combat ready forces to Fly, Fight and Win!

In response to the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) action, the 440th left Milwaukee in 2007 relocating to Pope Field, North Carolina. It is now under U.S. Army command and part of Fort Bragg supporting the US Army's 82nd Airborne Division and XVIII Airborne Corps. Today, the old 440th base is known as Milwaukee County's MKE Regional Business Park.

Timmerman Field

This airport was built in 1929 and dedicated on July 6, 1930. It was one of 25 such projects in U.S. cities constructed by the newly incorporated airplane manufacturer Curtiss-Wright. The airport was originally known as Curtiss-Wright Field, hence the letters "WC" in its airport codes. In 1945, Curtiss-Wright sold it to Fliteways, Inc., the airport's property manager since 1936. Milwaukee County purchased the airport from Fliteways in July 1947, when it was 131 acres in size. It was host to the Experimental Aircraft Association's earliest Fly-In Conventions from 1953 to 1958. The airport was renamed in July 1959 for Lawrence J. Timmerman, former chairman of the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors from 1936 to 1959.

Timmerman Airport currently serves various general aviation groups. The current fixed-base operator is Spring City Aviation. The airport is home to the Milwaukee chapter of Youth and Aviation, as well as two Civil Air Patrol squadrons; the Timmerman Composite Squadron, and Milwaukee Senior Support Squadron 10. The airport also serves many private and public users. MFD Station 4, housing Engine 4 and Truck 3 are located on the airport proper.

Aircraft Accidents

Milwaukee has had its share of aircraft mishaps over the years. Some more spectacular and newsworthy while others, in some instances, have gone completely unnoticed. The accounts that follow are varied in magnitude. All involved injuries and loss of life but resulted in very little property damage. Whether luck, the skill of the pilot or the flight crew, how each played a role in averting a major catastrophe will never be known.

The following incidents all occurred in the Milwaukee area:

28 August, 1932

The aircraft taxied out on the seaplane ramp at Maitland Field, taxied across the harbor to the entrance and began its takeoff run just before 7:30 a.m. Witnesses report the airplane “hopped” three to six times during its attempt to takeoff. Reports indicate the plane took off downwind and were investigated by company president John Kohler.

His report of no wind conflicted with weather bureau reports of a 12-knot wind at the time of the accident. Pilot James Benedict describes the takeoff, “We got up about 20-feet when the airplane seemed to enter a ‘dead air’ area and would not gather forward speed.” Benedict reported the left pontoon was smashed as the airplane struck the water. Kohler reported that the aircraft suffered more damage while under tow than during the accident.

A total of seven people, were aboard the Loening C-2C Air Yacht, all employees of Kohler Aviation. Only one passenger suffered a minor scalp wound.

07 August, 1934

A Lockheed Electra, model 10-A, took off from



Milwaukee Wisconsin. The takeoff was successful but when at an altitude of about twenty feet, the fuel warning lights came on and the left engine stopped. The pilot immediately switched the fuel valve to feed from both tanks and the co-pilot used the wobble pump (auxiliary pump). The plane lost altitude and settled to the ground with enough force to blow the right tire and break the right hub and wheel structure.

At the time of impact, the left engine started again and, under power of both engines, the plane lifted to an altitude of fifty to seventy-five feet. Then, the right engine stopped, throwing the planes attitude slightly to the right. The pilot immediately switched back to the left tank while the co-pilot continued using the wobble pump but did not feel that any fuel was getting through.



As the plane started to settle, the left engine slowly lost speed and the plane skidded on the right wing and nose, cartwheeling some seventy-five feet and coming to rest in an upright position.

The crash resulted with serious injuries to the crew and several passengers and the complete destruction of the aircraft.

17 December, 1954

The Lockheed PV-1 Ventura aircraft took off from runway 01 of General Mitchell Field Milwaukee, Wisconsin, at approximately 1708 hours (7:05 P.M.) for an IFR (Instrument Flight Rules) flight to Winnipeg, Canada. Aboard were Pilot Joseph Laird, copilot Paul Laird, and two passengers, Frederick Miller Sr., President of the Miller Brewing Company, and his son, Fred Miller Jr.

The Ventura was passing over the northern boundary of the airport, after an apparently normal takeoff, the Mitchell Field Tower Controller received the message, "an engine on fire" and "making an emergency landing." As the controller turned up all runway lights to the highest intensity, personnel in the tower observed a mushrooming mass of flame just north of the field. The aircraft had crashed in a nose-down



right-wing-low attitude in an open field approximately 3,200 feet north of the airport and west of a projected line of runway 01. A fire of large magnitude occurred after ground impact and continued for several hours before it was completely extinguished. All four occupants were killed.

05 August, 1959

A Wisconsin Air National Guard F-89 jet traveling at an estimated speed of 165 knots (190 m.p.h.) crashed into a fog shrouded barge moored in the Milwaukee harbor near the foot of E. Lincoln Avenue. The plane was making an instrument approach, from the north, to Mitchell Field in dense fog. Communications with air traffic control were normal and there was no indication of mechanical problems. The last-minute efforts of the flight crew were heroic as the pilot managed to avoid hitting the Jones Island tank farm to the west, capable of holding 70 million gallons of gasoline along with other petroleum products.

Just to the south of the accident, lies the densely populated bluff at the foot of E. Russell Avenue. In addition, the crippled jet coming in from the north, flew directly over the tanker *Detroit*, off-loading 600,000 thousand gallons of gasoline at pier #5 just prior to the crash.



The pilot and radar observer were killed in the crash. They were heralded as hero's for the airmanship displayed in controlling the aircraft to the point of impact surely avoiding a catastrophic loss of life and property. No one was on the vessel at the time, but three men working nearby were slightly injured by flying debris. Authorities were never able to determine a cause for the crash.

29 January, 1969

A USAF Milwaukee's Billy Mitchell Airport was initiated in poor weather conditions. Clouds were down to 200 feet and horizontal visibility limited to half a mile. On final, approach, the four-engine aircraft was too low, struck the ground and crashed in flames half a mile short of the runway threshold (runway thresholds are markings across the runway denoting the beginning and end of the designated space for landing and takeoff under non-emergency conditions). The aircraft was destroyed by the ensuing fire. Four occupants were killed and seven were injured.

06 September, 1985

Midwest Express Airlines Flight 105 was a scheduled domestic passenger flight which crashed into an open field in shortly after taking off from General Mitchell International Airport. Interestingly, this accident occurred not far from the 1969 KC-97 crash. The airplane was a DC-9 twin engine jet operated by Midwest Express Airlines.



Multiple eyewitnesses reported the plane was on fire shortly after it took off from the airport. The fire was caused due to a failure on the right engine where one of its removable sleeve spacers detached. The removable sleeve spacer suffered metal fatigue which caused the engine to explode.

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), team, responsible for the investigation of the crash, concluded that despite the plane suffering catastrophic right engine failure, the actions of the crew to the emergency was the main cause of the accident. The crew didn't properly control the plane during the event. This aircraft is designed to fly on one-engine during take-off (in an emergency). Breakdown of the crew's coordination also contributed the crash. There were 31 passengers and crew on board. There were no survivors.



10 December 1993

A 128th ANG airplane exploded in flames while undergoing routine ground maintenance. The KC-135 Stratotanker is a combination aerial refueling and cargo designed aircraft. It has a fuel capacity of roughly 31,000 gallons.

The aircraft was being serviced for minor electrical and avionics system problems (Avionics are the electronic systems used on aircraft, artificial satellites, and spacecraft). While ground crew members were performing everyday assigned duties, a violent explosion and fire rocked the aircraft. The blast is believed to have originated in the

center wing fuel tank. Six-senior enlisted Air Force maintenance personnel were killed. The aircraft was destroyed.

04 June, 2007

A Cessna Citation II, departed Milwaukee about 15:57 (3:57 P.M.) with an intended destination of Detroit-Willow Run Airport, MI. The airplane was used to transport unspecified organs for transplant to a patient in Michigan.



The pilot executed a climbing right turn to a northeast heading. The airplane's initial climb lasted for approximately one minute and then began another climb at about 1,300 feet per minute. Radar data then showed the airplane in a descending left turn attitude for the remaining 69 seconds of the data. The average descent rate during this period was 2,260 feet per minute. The airplane impacted the water of Lake Michigan at approximately 243 knots (280 m.p.h.) indicated airspeed, 42 degrees nose down, and 115 degrees left wing down.

During the climb the crew declared an emergency and their intention to return to Milwaukee. During those communications, one of the flight crew members reported that he had experienced a runaway trim (To "trim" an aircraft is to adjust the aerodynamic forces on the control surfaces.



During takeoff, without the trim in the proper position, you're going to have difficulty rotating and climbing and you can find your aircraft lurching out of its smooth cruise configuration into a dive or a stall. The aircraft was destroyed when it impacted Lake Michigan shortly after. The two pilots and four passengers were killed. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) determined the probable cause of this accident was the pilots' mismanagement of an abnormal flight control situation through improper actions, including failing to control airspeed and to prioritize control of the airplane, and lack of crew coordination.

29 July, 2015

At 6:08 p.m., a Socata TMB 700 aircraft, was on a 2.5-mile final approach, to Milwaukee's Timmerman Field. NTSB officials indicate the pilot asked the tower controller for the current wind conditions.

In a post-accident interview, the controller reported he established visual contact with the airplane when it was on a three-mile final approach to the runway. The controller stated that the aircraft's landing gear appeared to be extended during final approach, and the airplane landed within the runway's marked touchdown zone.

The controller stated that the airplane did not appear to bounce upon landing, however, he heard a squealing noise that was longer in duration than typical. Shortly after the landing, the report indicates the pilot transmitted "Go-Around", indicating he would be aborting his approach to landing.

The controller stated that he acknowledged the aborted landing and cleared the pilot to enter a left traffic pattern. In addition, he heard the engine speed accelerate and observed the airplane maintain a level altitude over the runway until it passed the "taxiway Charlie (C) intersection." He then observed the airplane pitch-up, enter a climbing left turn and appeared to "stall" during the climbing left turn. It subsequently descended into the ground while in a left wing down, low altitude attitude (An airplane "stall" is an aerodynamic condition in which an aircraft exceeds its given critical angle of attack and is no longer able to produce the required lift for normal flight. It has nothing to do with the engine or another mechanical part).



The pilot's improper pitch control during the landing, resulted in the propeller striking the runway. Also, failure to maintain adequate airspeed during the subsequent go-around, resulted in the airplane exceeding its critical angle of attack and experiencing an aerodynamic stall at a low altitude. Both pilot and his daughter perished in the crash.

Epilogue

I recall a couple of incidents that happened in the seventies that were quite unusual and certainly made liar's out of those who claim to "*have seen everything*". I don't have any specifics for each event as all I recall is that you don't see this kind of thing every day.

The first "odd ball" incident happened in 1973. I was aide to Deputy Chief Al Hainke Car 3, (Firefighting Deputy). I think we were in his office doing staffing when his phone rang. The conversation went something like this:

Dispatcher: "Yeah Chief, dispatcher. You're supposed to have a plane down, 84th and Capitol".

Hainke: "What?"

Dispatcher: "You've got some type of small plane down, 84th and Capitol, that's all we have".

Hainke: "84th and Capitol, what's going on?"

Dispatcher: "Caller states a small plane landed on 84th and Capitol, that's all we have".

Hainke: "OK, we'll take a ride".

The chief looked at me and calmly said, "let's take a ride, a plane landed on Capitol Drive".

Had I not heard the conversation I probably would have thought the chief was "working" on me. He was not. The photo (right) is what we saw when we arrived. That was indeed an unexpected strange sight.



The second event happened behind St. Francis Hospital located on Milwaukee's south side at 16th and Euclid. A small aircraft crashed at 18th and Euclid resting upside down in a small parking lot used by the hospital. Two short blocks away, Engine 23 and Ladder 14 along with the rest of a first alarm fire houses,

were probably in disbelief as to what they were being dispatched to. The dispatch conversation may have sounded something like this:

Dispatcher: “Engine 23, Ladder 14; Engine 7, Squad 5, Battalion 4; Engine 31: Ladder 11: We’ve got numerous calls of an airplane down, intersection 18th and Euclid, Eight-One and Euclid”

Engine 23 officer: “Dispatcher Engine 23, 10-23 (arrived on scene). Yep, we’ve got a plane down”.

The photo (below) is what E23 found on arrival.



I have included one of Murphy’s Laws of flight to finish the article on somewhat of a humorous note: The three most common expressions (or famous last words) in aviation are:

"Why is it doing that?",

"Where are we?" and

"Oh S—t!!!!"

And then finally, you've got your yellow flotation device deployed and you're safely in your raft.....and this happens.



In conclusion,

What do you call a plane that's about to crash?

An **“error plane”**.

