

## MEMBERSHIP FORM

I hereby apply for membership in the Fire Mark Circle of the Americas. I agree to abide by the Laws of the Circle currently in force and as may be altered from time to time. I am interested primarily in the fire marks for their historical value. Enclosed are my annual dues of \$30.00

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Business \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Business Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Ebay ID (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Send MAIL to my: Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Business Address: \_\_\_\_\_

How did you learn about FMCA? \_\_\_\_\_

Please check the following categories of interest to you as a member of the Fire Mark Circle or the Americas

\_\_\_\_\_ Fire marks in general

\_\_\_\_\_ Fire marks for U.S.A. \_\_\_\_\_ England \_\_\_\_\_ Other (Please List) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Old insurance company signs

\_\_\_\_\_ Modern Insurance company plaques

\_\_\_\_\_ Fire artifacts in general

\_\_\_\_\_ Specify fire artifacts (Please list) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Fire insurance memorabilia (Please list) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ May your collection be reviewed by appointment? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Would you serve on a committee? \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this form, with a check payable to FMCA to**

Logan Smith  
1010 Allgood Road  
Athens, GA 30606-5367



*YOUR INVITATION*

*to join the*

**FIRE MARK CIRCLE  
of the Americas**



Fire Mark  
Fire Association of Philadelphia



Fire Mark  
City Insurance Company  
Cincinnati



Fire Mark  
Chambersburg Fire Insurance Company

**FIRE MARK CIRCLE  
of the Americas**

**OBJECTIVES**

The Fire Mark Circle of the Americas (FMCA) is an organization of persons interested in the fire marks and other reminders of the early days of the fire insurance. The object of the Circle is to bring together persons interested in the origin and history of fire insurance companies and their fire marks, volunteer fire companies and fire fighting equipment, firemen's badges, medals and tokens, old insurance company signs and all that pertains to the past of fire insurance...for the purpose of exchanging, recording information and for the preservation of relics of the early days of fire insurance.

The FMCA was the first and only authorized branch of the Fire Mark Circle of England, which was organized in 1934, in 1975 FMCA became an independent organization, but because of our mutual interests, we are still strongly affiliated with the Fire Mark Circle of England. Members of the FMCA are automatically dues paying members of the Fire Mark Circle of England and receive copies of all their bulletins and newsletters.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The FMCA was organized in 1972 by a group of fire mark collectors in the United States. These collectors knew of numerous other collectors throughout the country who were interested in sharing information and exchanging fire marks and fire artifacts... but had no practical way of communicating with each other. The initial meeting of the FMCA was at the Museum of the Home Insurance Company in New York. This was the logical place for the first meeting because the Home Insurance Company had sponsored and published the "bible" of fire mark collectors, Footprints of the Assurance" by Alwin Bulau. Thirty-five members participated in the first meeting.

The founding members were Max Klein, Morton Werner, Eugene Morris, Albert Wilis, William Hedges, Thomas J. Yye, Home Ins. Co. and the Insurance Company of North America.

FMCA has members from all walks of life. In addition to insurance brokers and company

Personal, members include firefighters, attorneys, teachers, and museum curators. Newsletters are issues on a periodically basis and members are kept informed about matters of mutual interest. Annual three day meetings are held in various cities across the country.

Participation varies with each member, some are interested in receiving information and exchanging itmes by mail, others share these same interests in addition to taking part in the annual conventions. Annual dues, including membership in the Fire Mark Circle in England are \$30 a year.

### **HOW FMCA WILL BENEFIT YOU**

Through periodic Newsletters, monographs, mailings, some local meetings, and the annual convention, you will be kept informed and up-to-date on:

AVAILABILITY OF FIRE MARKS AND FIRE ARTIFACTS FOR SALE OR TRADE.....

OPPORTUNITY TO BID IN MAIL AUCTIONS OF FIRE MARKS OR AT THE ANNUAL CONVENTION AUCTION.....

ARTICLES OF A TECHNICAL NATURE AS SUBMITTED BY OUR MEMBERS.....

REPORTS FROM VARIOUS MEMBERS ON THEIR COLLECTING EXPERIENCE.....

WARNINGS AND REPORTS ON FAKE AND ON REPLICAS THAT COME TO THE ATTENTION OF OUR MEMBERS.....

AN OPPORTUNITY TO MEET YOUR FELLOW COLLECTORS AT OUR ANNUAL MEETINGS.

A ROSTER OF FELLOW COLLECTORS.....

THROUGH OUR ASSOCIATION WITH THE FIRE MARK CIRCLE OF ENGLAND YOU WILL BE KEPT INFORMED OF THEIR ACTIVITIES BY RECEIVING THEIR PERIODICALS.....

ACCESS TO UNPUBLISHED INFORMATION ON FIRE MARKS THROUGH A SUPPLEMENT TO "FOOTPRINTS OF ASSURANCE" IN THE FORM OF THREE ADDENDUMS TO THIS MAJOR WORK....

THE OPPORTUNITY TO PURCHASE "AN AMERICAN FIRE MARK PREMIER" WHICH IS A COMPLATION OF FIRE MARK ARTICLES TAKENE FORM BACK ISSUES OF FMCA PUBLICATIONS.

### **AMERICAN FIRE MARKS**

American fire marks are badges or plates that were issued by the early fire insurance companies to be affixed to a property that the company insured. Fire marks carried the insignia and or the name of the insurer. Fire marks were made of cast iron, sheet brass, lead, tin copper, or zinc. They came in carious sizes and shapes and were sometimes attached to a wooden plaque.

Fire marks originated in England. Each insurance company organized their own private fire brigade and the fire mark was used to identify to the fire brigade the party it insured. In America the volunteer fire companies came before the first insurance company was formed in 1752. Because half of the directors of the first insurance company in Philadelphia were also volunteer firemen, the function of the fire mark was to let the firemen know that a loss to the property would affect them as a mutual policy holder. Hopefully the firemen would then give their best effort and also minimize damage while fighting the fire. The presence of a fire mark may also have deferred arson so prevalent in colonial times.

By 1800 fire mark were used for advertising purposes. Fire marks were used in America for 150 years. While newly organized insurers issued fire marks up the 1890's b the 1870's their use declined. There were replaced by the more colorful and cheaper print advertising.

Fire marks are a company's distinctive mark, and are historical reminders of an industry with little tangible evidence of its existence other than contracts and pieces of paper.