

## Ceremony honors 9/11 victims, fallen Memphis firefighters

By Hank Dudding (Contact), Memphis Commercial Appeal  
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A shard of glass is Henry Posey's window to 9/11.

Every year, the Memphis Fire Department division chief puts the ice-cube-size chip from the fallen World Trade Center in the coat pocket of his dress uniform, right over his heart.



Hank Dudding/The Commercial Appeal

**Division chief Henry Posey carries this shard of glass from the World Trade Center over his heart every Sept. 11. He attended ceremonies at the Fire Museum on Friday to honor 9/11 victims and Memphis firefighters who died in the line of duty.**

"It's just special, because it connects you. They took the hit, but we feel the pain," said Posey, who got the glass from a New York City firefighter.

Posey was among the first-responders, dignitaries and family members who attended a dual ceremony at the Fire Museum of Memphis on Friday morning to honor the victims of 9/11 and fallen Memphis firefighters.

Also taking place Friday was a memorial at Altruria Elementary in Bartlett, where students sang and shared a moment of silence and officials spoke during a flag-raising ceremony.

Among those at the event at the fire museum Downtown were Memphis Mayor Pro Tem Myron Lowery and Shelby County Mayor A C Wharton, both of whom are running for mayor of Memphis, and U.S. Rep. Steve Cohen, D-Memphis.

The attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, killed thousands at the World Trade Center in New York City, the Pentagon in Washington and aboard the airliners terrorists hijacked to use as missiles.

"9/11, like Pearl Harbor, is a day we'll long remember because it was a direct attack on our nation," said Cohen. "It was, like Pearl Harbor, a day that will live in infamy."

Tourist David Rugowski, 55, and his wife, Jane, 58, of Mount Vernon, Ill., took seats in the museum courtyard before bagpipes sounded to begin the ceremony.

While Cohen compared 9/11 to Pearl Harbor, David Rugowski likened the attacks to another national tragedy.

"9/11 had the same impact as (the Kennedy) assassination. It just stunned the nation," he said.

But the attacks also planted the seeds for a more tightly knit nation, he said.

"The idea of community was a very positive outcome," he said.

After a bell tolled for each of the 53 Memphis firefighters to die in the line of duty, Posey pulled his treasured keepsake from his coat pocket.

A firefighter from the New York Fire Department's Ladder 9 gave it to him in 2002, he said.

"Something so simple as a piece of glass, but yet it means so much," Posey said. "I've always carried it on 9/11."