



MAKESHIFT MEMORIAL: Due to a lack of cooperation by the property owners at 23rd Street, the Department was forced to erect a "makeshift" memorial for their 1976 annual F.D.N.Y. memorial services. When the 1976 services were concluded, these same outstanding citizens demanded that the plaque dedicated to the victims of the 23rd Street fire be removed. There had to be something better for these men who had made the supreme sacrifice.

SCULPTURE MEMORIAL TO TWELVE

The years fly by, and suddenly it's 1976 and the nation is singing "Happy Birthday" to itself. On October 17, 1976, the Fire Department of the City of New York returns to 23rd Street for memorial services. A bugler stands at the ready. Men with pipes and drums from the Emerald Society Bagpipe Band stand out in their crimson jackets. Mourning purple and black bunting flutters in the breeze. The Mayor is there. So is John O'Hagan, now the Fire Commissioner. Commissioner O'Hagan announces that twelve streets at the brand new Fire Academy on Randalls Island will be named in honor of the fallen men. Reilly Boulevard, McCarron Drive, Higgins Avenue, Finley Place, Priore Road, Berry Place, Galanaugh Lane, Kaminsky Road, Kelly Street, Carl Lee Place, Tepper Avenue and



RETURN TO 23RD STREET: The official F.D.N.Y. Memorial Services were, once again, held at 23rd Street on October 17, 1976, to coincide with the tenth anniversary and brought those in attendance back to the scene of the grim tragedy. Presiding at the ceremonies were Mayor Abraham D. Beame and Fire Commissioner John T. O'Hagan. O'Hagan announced that 12 streets on the grounds of the brand new Fire Academy would be named in honor of the fallen heroes from 23rd Street.

scorched metal. All the pieces come from debris gathered at the scenes of actual fires. The men in the fire-





PAYING HOMAGE: Fire Commissioner John T. O'Hagan was joined at the 1976 official wreath laying ceremony at Memorial Services by Chief of Staff Joseph Flynn (to the left) and F.D.N.Y. Chaplain Rev. Wilfred S. Callender (to the right). Pictured in the rear were Union chiefs, President Edwin Jennings of the Uniformed Fire Officers Association, and President Michael "Mickey" Maye of the Uniformed Firefighters Association.



LASTING MEMORIAL: During Fire Prevention Week of 1976, Firefighter-Sculptor Ralph Feldman saw his "Memorial to Twelve" officially dedicated at the Cathedral of St. John The Divine. Leading the F.D.N.Y. delegation was Steve Murphy, the silver-haired First Deputy Fire Commissioner, pictured in the forefront. The solemn procession and dedication also included (l to r) Mrs. Joseph Kelly, Father Richard Mann, Mrs. John Finley, The Very Reverend James Morton, Mrs. Rudy Kaminsky, Executive Assistant to the Fire Commissioner Sandy Sansevero, and Chief Officers John Fogarty, Joseph Flynn, John O'Regan, and William Alford. The sculpture "Memorial To Twelve" is permanently on display at the Cathedral.

house are amazed at the end result: A thirty foot charred beam, grasped at the cross beam by a skeletal hand of steel.

"It never occurred to me that I was building a sort of cross," says Feldman. "But obviously that's

what we have here." Now comes the hard part for the firefighter-sculptor. "Where to put it?" exclaims Feldman. His idea of installing it at the site of the fire is rejected by the owners of the property at 23rd Street.

One night in the firehouse kitchen, someone





WORK AT ART: At the conclusion of the official dedication ceremonies at the Cathedral of St. John The Divine for the "Sculpture Memorial To Twelve," Firefighter-Sculptor Ralph Feldman chatted with three widows of the 23rd St. fire. Feldman explained the real thoughts behind his unique creation to (l to r) Ann Kelly, Ethel Finley, and Jeanette Kaminsky.

suggests, "Hey, Ralph, why not a church?" The Very Reverend James Morton and Father Richard Mann of the Cathedral of St. John The Divine, are impressed with the sculpture, and the spirit in which it was created. The monument is permanently installed in the Cathedral of St. John The Divine. A ceremony is held and the candles in the Cathedral flicker in eternal vigilance. The monument has found a permanent place in God's house. Ralph Feldman can be truly proud — **THEY WILL BE REMEMBERED!**

TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY

On October 8, 1986, Annual Fire Department Memorial Services were held for members of the NYC Fire Department who answered the last alarm. This year's F.D.N.Y. Memorial Services, as usual, took place at the Firemen's Monument at Riverside Drive and 100th Street. Dignitaries such as Governor Mario Cuomo, Mayor Edward I. Koch and Fire Commissioner Joseph Spinnato, take time out from their busy schedules to pay tribute to New York's "Bravest" and remember the victims of the

23rd Street fire and all those firefighter heroes, who have made the supreme sacrifice battling the ravages of fire in a war that never ends.

The lads — Bill Duffy, Frank O'Rourke, Jim Ginty, Jack Clarke, Ed Geraghty, Pat Hickey, Don



MEMORIAL SERVICES: U.F.A. President Nicholas Mancuso addressed the assemblage at the Firemen's Monument at the 1986 F.D.N.Y. Annual Memorial Services and remembered those members who answered the last alarm. The Union Chief paid special tribute to the victims of the 23rd Street fire on the occasion of the 20th anniversary. A week later, Mayor Edward I. Koch and Fire Commissioner Joseph Spinnato (pictured to the right) joined Nick Mancuso at Madison Square Park where a memorial vigil was conducted and a plaque dedication was the focal point of the 20th anniversary service to remember the 23rd Street twelve.

