

SHOP TALK

VOLUME 1

CHAPTER 5

The request came in that Costa Mesa Fire Association needed to modify their Association fire truck so that it would be able to carry a casket. The plan was to remove the tank and put it seats all around the back leaving enough that the casket could also be carried. First we removed the hose dividers and then we removed the inspection covers on the top of the tank.



By removing these plates we can assure ourselves that all the water is out and it will also give us an area to feed our chains thru when we go to lift it out. Next it's time to disconnect the fittings that hook up to the pump and also we remove the bolts that hold the tank onto the frame.



With all that done it's time to lift the tank out. We wrap a chain thru the openings and attach them to the forklift. We lift the tank straight out and set it to the side. In order for people and the casket to get in the back we need to cut the rear diamond plate. We call around and get the dimension of a casket. It turns out that they are 28 inches by 82 inches. With this information we decide to make the door opening 34 inches wide.



We use an abrasive cutoff saw and cut along the lines that we had laid out.



Next it's time to frame the inside in. The floor was built so it was slightly beneath the ledge by the cutout for the door. The sides for the seats were built to cover the wheel wells. Then we bought and attached a piano hinge and a latch for the door. The inside was primed and painted red to match. Rails were fabricated up so the could be used for handles.



In order to spiff up the inside Oak planks were attached to the seats. A chrome strip was placed on the top of the rear diamond plate also the back diamond plate was primed and repainted.



Written By Darrell Gilbert © 2006