

# Smoky, the Ecorse Fire Dog

By Kathy Covert



In Ecorse many, many years ago,  
A little brown dog looked for some place to go,  
He wandered around with no occupation,  
Then he found the Outer Drive Fire Station!

The firemen gave him warm food and a bed,  
“Hop on the fire truck and ride with us,” they said.  
“You can help put out fires, but that’s not all,  
You can make lots of friends with a shake of your  
paw.”

Smoky kept his paw busy all day and some nights,  
Greeting hundreds of children, both black and white,  
If the boys and girls felt sad or came down sick,  
Smoky licked their hands and did funny tricks!

Children from schools  
Miller and One, Two,  
and Three,  
Came to watch and  
admire the antics of  
Smoky,  
Smoky did somersaults  
and then stopped on a  
dime,  
Next, he barked to the  
children, “It’s sing-  
along-time!”





Smoky and the children sang songs up and  
down,

Smoky and the children sang songs all around  
town!

Their songs traveled to High Street and Labadie,  
Their songs traveled to Southfield and School  
Three,

When the children felt especially bold,  
Their songs rang in the air on Pepper Road!

Their songs shook cattails along the Detroit River,  
Then tired Ecorse people gave a great shiver,  
Exhausted Ecorse people fell in a huge heap,  
They shouted, "Stop! We like your songs, but we  
need sleep!"



So Smoky and his friends sang short and snappy,  
To keep the people of Ecorse happy,  
Then Mr. Saylor and Mr. Campbell taking  
matters in hand,  
Recruited them to march in the Ecorse High  
School marching band.



Smoky and his friends practiced on the  
Ecorse High School track,  
It was usually dark before they got back,  
Smoky and his friends discovered the  
strangest thing,  
They didn't have very much time to sing!

For a time Ecorse people sighed with relief,  
The marching did make the singing more brief,  
Then the band got instruments and started to play,  
Ecorse people closed windows for many a day.



But soon they opened their windows again by  
choice,

They missed the noise and they missed Smoky's  
voice,

At last came time for Smoky to retire,

Sadly he fought his very last fire.

He rescued a kitten from a burning house,

He even saved the kitten's toy mouse!

All of Smoky's friends gathered to say goodbye,  
They stood in the the firehouse and started to cry,  
His heart told Smoky what to say and do,  
"Don't cry," he barked. "Our friendship isn't  
through,  
I'm not leaving forever, never fear,  
Remember me and I'll always be near."

## **Smoky, the Fire House Dog Really Did Live in Ecorse!**

Smoky the fire house dog really did exist. Here is a story about him from the Ecorse Advertiser in 1961.

In March 1961, hundreds of Ecorse children and the city's firemen mourned the death of Smoky, the bandy legged beagle who had been the Fire Department's mascot for eight years.

Smoky was just a cuddly little puppy when William Smith, assistant fire chief, brought him to the Number Two Fire Station on Outer Drive. Smoky enjoyed entertaining children at a fire or fire prevention lecture. According to William Smith, Smoky had a record of long, faithful service since he was on duty 24 hours each day and had no day off. The only blot on his record was a one day absence that Smoky never talked about.

William Smith kept a scrapbook of the highlights of Smoky's career as a member of the Ecorse Fire Department. Smoky had his picture taken with Detroit Tiger players and often visited other fire departments in Detroit, Hamtramck and other Downriver communities.

Finally, age slowed Smoky down and in March 1961, he retired permanently.

“Smoky may have gone, but the children of Ecorse will miss his playful antics and his comrades will long remember their favorite firefighter whose loyalty was unswerving,” Smith said.



Fireman  
William  
Smith



