

Transcript

00:00:00 **Narrator**

You tuned into another edition of the break room, a weekly conversation about how the city of Saint Augustine works from those who do the work every day, hosted by the City of Saint Augustine's communications director Melissa Wissel. The break room offers a closer look at the different city departments and provides updates on current and upcoming projects and events. And now your host.

00:00:20 **Narrator**

Melissa Wissel.

00:00:21 **Melissa Wissel**

Welcome to the break room and thanks for tuning in. I'm Melissa Whistle, communications director for the City of Saint Augustine.

00:00:27 **Melissa Wissel**

Barry Fox, our retired police chief, is joining us this week in studio to talk about a project he's been working on for a fallen police officer. It's a little bit of a different topic for us. This police officer was killed back in the late 1800s. This is a quite a story tale for the summary it.

00:00:41 **Barry Fox**

He was.

00:00:46 **Barry Fox**

Was, you know?

00:00:47 **Barry Fox**

So you have to help me out with this particular date. I think it was about eight months ago. You contacted me and and.

00:00:57 **Barry Fox**

Officer Brown contacted me in reference to being contacted by Captain Sprague or Bob Alvarez that from the Jersey City. He's a retired law enforcement and his his partner, Frank Sprig, captain Frank Sprig retired. Is his labor of love, is researching historical libraries and in newspapers and ensuring that.

00:01:02 **Melissa Wissel**

Bob.

00:01:04 **Melissa Wissel**

Yes, right.

00:01:17 **Barry Fox**

He identifies fallen officers in the line of duty and make sure that he contacts the agencies where that officer worked and to make sure that they've been recognized. And it so happened that he had come across the news.

00:01:29 **Barry Fox**

Article.

00:01:31 **Barry Fox**

In reference to a police officer who had been killed in the city of Saint Augustine. Now I've I spent you know, years.

00:01:38 **Barry Fox**

2004 on researching the Saint Augustine Police Department because there's our history has been lost and we've been trying to rebuild it and and document it and I never found any of any of this.

00:01:48 **Melissa Wissel**

Interesting that it that it came from somebody.

00:01:50

That.

00:01:51 **Melissa Wissel**

So far outside of here.

00:01:51 **Barry Fox**

So far away. Yeah. Yeah. So what he was doing was he was actually researching savannahs.

00:01:58 **Barry Fox**

Archives and in the Savannah Paper there was a section in the 1800s, eighteen 80s there was a section 1887 to be exact. There was a section in the Savannah Paper called the Morning News that was related to St. Augustine, FL and they would capture things and really and publish them in the.

00:02:18 **Barry Fox**

And the news any. And he found that Savannah article on a police officer that had been severely injured on November 4th during an arrest and and he kind of kept tracking that through the days. And he found that on November 9th, they reported that he had passed and and he had been buried by the fire department.

00:02:19 **Melissa Wissel**

Wow.

00:02:37 **Barry Fox**

So he did a little more digging and he and he tried to do what everybody does and tries to Research Saint Augustine record archives, and they just don't exist. And that's why we can't get anywhere because I think it was a fire or something that that they were lost in.

00:02:48

Right.

00:02:50 **Barry Fox**

So he he jumped over to Putnam County, Placa Daily News, and he found some of the same articles. So they contacted me about this individual or contacted you. And and you about this individual. Both of you came to me and I had never heard of it before. So, but I knew how to get around the archive. Yeah, the historical library.

00:02:54 **Melissa Wissel**

OK.

00:03:00

Right.

00:03:11 **Barry Fox**

So I'm going immediately down there with the information I had and I started looking and lo and behold, I was able to find some things, and the things I found were kind of.

00:03:22 **Barry Fox**

Astonishing because.

00:03:25 **Barry Fox**

There's one log book in the Police Department articles and historical library from the 1811 leather.

00:03:32 **Melissa Wissel**

Wow, they're.

00:03:34 **Barry Fox**

And log book and it basically is. It's the schedule, a handwritten schedule for that night. And then everybody that they arrest.

00:03:43 **Melissa Wissel**

OK.

00:03:44 **Barry Fox**

And it started out on August 5th, and it and it lists our officer, Robert Chambers, OK. And it lists the arrest of an individual by the name of Henry Glover.

00:03:54 **Barry Fox**

On August 5th.

00:03:57 **Barry Fox**

And then there's nothing else. When we knew from the news articles that Robert Chambers was the officer that lost his life after attempting to arrest him, leak lover and was assaulted by Henry Glover and died three days later.

00:04:09 **Barry Fox**

So there were some there was some.

00:04:13 **Barry Fox**

Issues associated with the dates. This is in August. This log book is in August. It's handwritten.

00:04:17 **Barry Fox**

But the news art paper articles are in November, so but it but it.

00:04:19 **Melissa Wissel**

It's not.

00:04:21 **Barry Fox**

Was one book.

00:04:22 **Melissa Wissel**

Can't mean that it takes that.

00:04:23 **Melissa Wissel**

Long to report.

00:04:24 **Barry Fox**

Right. But you know that luckily enough, it was just the the one book. So the fact that the book existed in the way that it existed, there should have been hundreds of books. But.

00:04:28

OK.

00:04:33 **Barry Fox**

There's only.

00:04:33 **Barry Fox**

Only one, the only one that survived. OK. So I then. Then he then leads me to the death certificates and we start looking around in death certificates. And lo and behold, here's the handwritten death certificate on Robert Chambers.

00:04:34 **Melissa Wissel**

Only one, the only one that survived.

00:04:49 **Barry Fox**

Policemen died results of injuries.

00:04:52 **Melissa Wissel**

And what happened? I mean, how do we, how did they get to that?

00:04:53 **Barry Fox**

So. So that's the other well, because I'm just trying to find anything. You know, I'm going through everything. And so now I've got his death certificate that lists him as a policeman and it listing as a result of injuries. So then I go to the.

00:04:56 **Melissa Wissel**

OK. Gotcha.

00:05:07 **Barry Fox**

So then we go to all the other documents that we have commissioned books. And I'm I'm talking large, you know the the two by eight. Yes, you know it's not. It's it's handwritten leather bound sheets and I go to the notes for that this period and I find that.

00:05:15 **Melissa Wissel**

It's not microfiche. Yeah.

00:05:28 **Barry Fox**

Officer Chambers arrested five people on August 5th, Henry Glover being one of them. OK. Henry Glover was the very first one to appear in the mayor's court the next day. OK, first thing it was. This is in August, so he said.

00:05:39 **Melissa Wissel**

OK. And this is in August, the repeat offenders, what we're about to find out well.

00:05:45 **Barry Fox**

Yeah.

00:05:46 **Barry Fox**

He was the first one to be heard in the mayor's court that day and.

00:05:48 **Melissa Wissel**

OK.

00:05:49 **Barry Fox**

Officer Chambers did not show up.

00:05:51 **Barry Fox**

And Henry Glover's case was dismissed. But soon after that case was dismissed, Officer Chambers showed up.

00:05:58 **Melissa Wissel**

OK.

00:05:59 **Barry Fox**

So the mayor recommended.

00:06:02 **Barry Fox**

A suspension for Officer Chambers because he failed to show up for in night lovers, a hearing. He was suspended come November. He had been reinstated.

00:06:07 **Melissa Wissel**

OK.

00:06:14 **Barry Fox**

And on November 4th, he runs into Henry Glover again in the in the city somewhere and attempts to arrest him, and there's a.

00:06:19 **Melissa Wissel**

In downtown.

00:06:23 **Melissa Wissel**

Because there's something he was.

00:06:24 **Barry Fox**

Doing right, there's no documentation on what he was doing, but he's physically assaulted by Henry Glover and to the point that he he's beaten so severely that he lays dying for three days in a room in a rooming house, OK.

00:06:28 **Melissa Wissel**

OK.

00:06:40 **Barry Fox**

So.

00:06:41 **Barry Fox**

We've got that documentation and then we have in November.

00:06:47 **Barry Fox**

15th, I believe you've got notes in the in the Commission notes where they approve \$6 to pay to the rooming house for the room and board of three days. Well, while he lay dying and passed away. So you know the the Providence, I guess is what the for lack of a better term, I guess I've I've built.

00:06:57 **Melissa Wissel**

Wow.

00:07:01 **Melissa Wissel**

Now.

00:07:03 **Melissa Wissel**

Yeah.

00:07:06 **Barry Fox**

That his name has been submitted to the National Law Enforcement, to the to the state of.

00:07:12 **Melissa Wissel**

Florida, do you have? So you so all of this research is leading to what like you're talking about your submitting. So when Bob came to you basically it's making sure that all.

00:07:25 **Melissa Wissel**

Police officers who were killed in the line of duty are memorialized. So what you're getting to now is now that you've established all of this, where do we going?

00:07:28

Yes.

00:07:31 **Barry Fox**

I have to submit right? So I take everything that I have his death certificate, the news articles, marriage certificates, whatever.

00:07:32 **Melissa Wissel**

To do with it.

00:07:40 **Barry Fox**

You can find and I submit them to the different organizations that recognize the law enforcement officers in line of duty deaths. He has been submitted to the national and the state, and that will take a while for them to vet. They may contact us and ask us For more information, but I think we're on pretty solid ground if he is recognized that when he is recognized.

00:08:00 **Barry Fox**

He will be recognized as the 1st.

00:08:04 **Barry Fox**

Right now, as the very first law enforcement officer killed in the line.

00:08:08 **Barry Fox**

Of duty in St. John's County.

00:08:12 **Barry Fox**

In addition to that, he was a he was a black police officer, which is, you know, for that time it was a was a common kind of occurrence. The the twist on the whole thing was is that he was also a member of the Saint.

00:08:22 **Melissa Wissel**

Currents, yeah.

00:08:28 **Melissa Wissel**

Augustine. Fire department. Well, I was going to ask you. You.

00:08:31 **Melissa Wissel**

Said he was buried by the fire department.

00:08:33 **Barry Fox**

Yes. So so it appears that back then to be a police officer or fire department member you you basically.

00:08:42 **Melissa Wissel**

Had to be both.

00:08:43 **Barry Fox**

Your contract. Now you worked a couple of months as a police officer. You worked for months when? When other people you kind of like bid it. I'll do it for \$5. You know, there's things like that. I'll do it for \$10 this month. And someone else says I'll do it for 8:00 and they get to come. So it was kind of like that. So when he wasn't being a police officer, he win a contract with the fire department. Or however that worked. It was a, it was a.

00:08:44 **Melissa Wissel**

OK.

00:08:51 **Melissa Wissel**

OK.

00:08:55 **Melissa Wissel**

OK.

00:09:02 **Melissa Wissel**

He couldn't decide if he wanted to be.

00:09:02 **Barry Fox**

Just.

00:09:04 **Barry Fox**

A fireman or not, I'm positive, I'm sure. Chief families and I would disagree with but.

00:09:05 **Barry Fox**

On.

00:09:11 **Barry Fox**

But yes, he was he was an honored. As reported, he was an honored member of the Fire Department and the Fire Department laid him to rest. Now, at that point right there, right. We lose track of everything. OK, so we know that in we know that he was married that.

00:09:31 **Barry Fox**

I'm. I'm sorry I didn't bring my glasses, so this may be kind of painful. We know that. Robert. Robert Chambers married.

00:09:39 **Barry Fox**

Hattie Curry in 1882 and that they had a daughter.

00:09:43 **Barry Fox**

By the name of Laura.

00:09:45 **Barry Fox**

But because.

00:09:47 **Barry Fox**

They're both female and I I don't mean, but because of both female that time frame, the name is lost, it gets lost for, you know, from chambers. Did you go back to Curry? Did they change their name? We believe now on his death certificate. He's listed as being a resident of Nassau. OK.

00:09:51 **Melissa Wissel**

Their name goes.

00:09:54 **Melissa Wissel**

For.

00:10:07 **Barry Fox**

We don't know if that's Nassau County, Florida, Nassau County.

00:10:10 **Barry Fox**

Your Nassau, Bahamas, we believe it's Nassau, Bahamas, but we did find in a census where a Robert Chambers during that time frame was documented with.

00:10:10 **Melissa Wissel**

New York, right?

00:10:12

5.

00:10:24 **Barry Fox**

Hattie and Laura, but listed South Carolina what has been explained to me is that if.

00:10:27 **Melissa Wissel**

OK.

00:10:33 **Barry Fox**

Robert Chambers or his parents were slaves.

00:10:37 **Barry Fox**

They were the chambers is the owners. Last name would be that name. So you would have to trace them back through slave owners in that manner. And I I don't know that I'm getting this completely right, but that's the, you know. And then there was a connection to Gainesville and we know that there was a.

00:10:41 **Melissa Wissel**

OK.

00:10:48

Quite.

00:10:58 **Barry Fox**

Chambers Chambers in Gainesville. An owner of slaves in chain and we know that a large group of.

00:11:02 **Melissa Wissel**

OK.

00:11:09 **Barry Fox**

It freed slaves by the good last name of Chambers came out of Gainesville. So we know that much, but we believe that and here. And here's the problem. I'm not one of these at home genealogy experts, but I know they exist.

00:11:11 **Melissa Wissel**

Can you?

00:11:22 **Barry Fox**

So we're putting out a.

00:11:23 **Melissa Wissel**

Call asking so we're asking folks to help us find any any remaining.

00:11:24 **Barry Fox**

Oh yeah, yeah, apps.

00:11:27 **Barry Fox**

Absolutely if.

00:11:29 **Barry Fox**

Any family that we could.

00:11:30 **Melissa Wissel**

Descendants.

00:11:30 **Barry Fox**

Because we would love to.

00:11:31 **Barry Fox**

Be able to locate any of the extended family and and have them honored. When we bring this all together, we do plan on building a memorial. I believe that's kind of changing as we move along. I think there's we're going to make it.

00:11:48 **Barry Fox**

What a joint. We're not sure. I'm gonna. I think I'm gonna approach the Commission to to look at some other desks that have been associated with city employees and just kind of do this thing as an all-encompassing kind of a memorial or or something and.

00:11:50 **Melissa Wissel**

Yeah, I don't know yet.

00:12:04 **Barry Fox**

Because we do have some other deaths of city employees while they were serving our citizens so.

00:12:09 **Melissa Wissel**

Are you on? So we've got about two minutes because you've.

00:12:13 **Melissa Wissel**

You've captivated me this whole time. I haven't even had a chance to tell everybody what they're listening to. Which.

00:12:17 **Barry Fox**

And you told me to talk. They didn't say you.

00:12:18 **Melissa Wissel**

Is very which is.

00:12:19 **Barry Fox**

Wanted to ask questions.

00:12:21 **Melissa Wissel**

Fox talking Barry talks and we are this great project though of really the importance being recognizing those police officers killed in the line of duty.

00:12:22 **Barry Fox**

Barry.

00:12:22 **Barry Fox**

Talks.

00:12:35 **Melissa Wissel**

We're hoping to find descendants of the Chambers family.

00:12:40 **Melissa Wissel**

And we're looking forward, what you're looking to do here in town is to do something that we can have a memorial.

00:12:47 **Barry Fox**

Absolutely.

00:12:49 **Barry Fox**

Created yes and for the and for the the genealogy slice out there that may want to help me. We're looking for any family associated. Robert Chambers or Hattie Curry Chambers or Laura?

00:13:00 **Barry Fox**

Chambers.

00:13:01 **Barry Fox**

And then we also lost track of Henry Glover. OK, but Henry Glover was married to Mary Granger. There is absolutely no.

00:13:12 **Barry Fox**

Documentation as to what happened to Henry Glover. OK, but we believe Henry Glover had a son by the name of Henry Glover and actually adopted son by the name of Cornelius Adams. That was documented on census here in Saint Augustine in the 1885. So it had been two years before the event.

00:13:30 **Melissa Wissel**

OK.

00:13:31 **Melissa Wissel**

Before this, you think they'll be checking out history and archives and.

00:13:32 **Barry Fox**

Yeah. So.

00:13:36 **Barry Fox**

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

00:13:38 **Barry Fox**

Service it's been it's been a it's been it's one of those things I can get. I mean the whole day can go by really, really quick. When I'm when I'm getting that Marina, you know, all my misses of headphones from musics, and I'd really be zoomed.

00:13:45 **Melissa Wissel**

Yeah.

00:13:49 **Barry Fox**

And but so.

00:13:50 **Melissa Wissel**

Well, it's a fascinating story. We've run out of time. We didn't even get to talk about all the other things that you're working on. So we'll, we'll have you come back and talk about that because there's some exciting stuff happening with data centers and homeless and code enforcement and all that, all that others, all that other stuff you are responsible for.

00:14:02 **Barry Fox**

Very.

00:14:03 **Barry Fox**

Yeah, almost. Yeah.

00:14:06 **Barry Fox**

Short term rentals.

00:14:09

Yeah.

00:14:10 **Barry Fox**

Changes in short term rentals we.

00:14:11 **Barry Fox**

Probably need to soon. Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

00:14:12 **Melissa Wissel**

OK, we'll get. We'll get you back soon. Well, Barry, thanks for coming and sharing the story of Officer Chambers and Henry Glover. And like you said, any of those ancestral ancestry sleuths out there, you can reach Barry at the city of Saint Augustine.

00:14:26 **Melissa Wissel**

And thanks for coming and talking in the.

00:14:29 **Barry Fox**

Break room. Thank you for having me.

00:14:31 **Melissa Wissel**

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00:14:52 **Melissa Wissel**

Be sure to follow us on all of our social platforms. You can catch us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram at City Saint Aug until next time. Thanks for tuning in.

00:15:01 **Narrator**

You've been listening to the break room, a weekly program addressing projects and programs offered by the City of Saint Augustine. Join us each week as the city's communications director, Melissa Wissel, has in-depth conversations with the people who make our town work to meet the needs of our community. See you at this time next week for another edition of the break.

