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## House Fire Claims Life Of Fire Chief's Brother

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**Pennsylvania** - The borough fire chief's brother was killed and three others were injured in a fire in the 100 block of South Pond Street early Sunday. Robert Graham, 42, died in the fire at his home, according to Lackawanna County Coroner Tim Rowland. An autopsy is scheduled for today, Mr. Rowland said.

Mr. Graham is the brother of Taylor Borough Fire Chief David Graham, Fire Department Ladder Capt. John Tigue said.

The three others injured in the fire at the single-family dwelling at 120 S. Pond St. suffered smoke-related injuries and burns. They were being treated at the Lehigh Valley Burn Center in Allentown, Taylor police Officer Stephen Derenick said. He did not release the names of those injured on Sunday.

The state police fire marshal's office has said the cause is undetermined "at this point," Officer Derenick said. Taylor and state police fire marshals are investigating.

On Sunday afternoon, silence hung over Mr. Graham's block of South Pond Street. Caution tape wrapped around the blackened, ashy shell of house number 120 as the smell of fire and smoke lingered in the air. Cars slowed as they passed to get a look at the house, but no one stopped to approach it. Neighbors remained inside their homes.

The scene was quite different a few hours earlier.

The fire broke out around 3:50 a.m., according to the Lackawanna County Communications Center.

"The whole house was on fire," by the time firefighters arrived on scene, Capt. Tigue said, noting he saw flames shooting out of the downstairs windows of the two-story home.

Of the four people in the building, two had already escaped when firefighters arrived, he said. As firefighters battled the raging flames, a third escaped by jumping from the second floor into a snow bank.

Mr. Graham was trapped in a second-floor bedroom, Capt. Tigue said.

"We couldn't get to him through the flames." Capt. Tigue said. "The steps to the second floor were destroyed."

Firefighters battled the blaze for three hours, first attempting to enter the burning building from the first floor. When flames pushed them back, Capt. Tigue said firefighters on scene altered their strategy, attacking the flames from the second floor using a ladder truck.

Capt. Tigue said the fire was under control by 7 a.m.. Fire companies from Taylor, Moosic, Old Forge, Scranton, South Abington Twp. and Avoca responded to the blaze.

Written by Sarah Scinto

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