

Historic Belmont Firehouse

Safety Learning Center & Fire Museum News

Issue 25
July 2008

The Safety Learning Center & Fire Museum is a cooperative effort between Portland Fire & Rescue and the Jeff Morris Fire & Life Safety Foundation.

For Information or appointments:

Don Porth

Public Education Office

503-823-3615

Belmont Firehouse

900 SE 35th Avenue

(at Belmont Street)

Portland OR 97214

Open the 2nd Saturday
of each month 10 till 3
or by appointment.

No Safety Saturday
in July & August

“Straight Tips”

Beat the Heat!

Keep the heat from spoiling your summer by being aware of it's impact. By drinking plenty of water, you help your body's defense against heat. Sweating is good. If someone is hot and no longer sweating, a serious medical situation is developing. Sunscreen, hydration, and relief from the sun and heat will help you keep your cool.

Think Safe.

Happy 155th Birthday PF&R

It has been a common held belief that the fire department in Portland, Oregon began in the year 1883. In fact, this marked the beginning of the “paid” fire department. The name at that time actually was “Portland Paid Fire Department” or PPF. The distinction was made to differentiate the volunteer era from the new paid era.

Prior to 1883, the city did support a fire service. The biggest difference was the lack of a dedicated budget and all personnel were volunteers. However, in order for a volunteer company to operate in the city of Portland, it had to receive approval from city council. At that point, the city would purchase firefighting equipment and support firehouses.

The first volunteer company proposed to the city was Pioneer Engine Company #1. Thomas Dryer, then editor of the Oregonian, was the driving force behind the 1851 venture. And while his proposal went to city council, Mayor

Hugh O’Bryant declined to add his signature, thus blocking the effort.

It would take two years for another proposal to resurface, resulting in Vigilance Hook & Ladder’s beginning on August 1, 1853. Willamette Engine Company #1 would begin protecting the Southern Division of the city on August 6, 1853.

An effort to establish Northerner Engine Company was approved, but the Company lacked equipment and a firehouse, and dropped from sight within a few months. It would take three years before Multnomah Engine Company #2 would come into being on November 25, 1856.

On August 1, 2008, wish Portland Fire & Rescue a happy 155th Birthday, and many happy returns.

Think Safe!

“Black Saturday” Devastates Portland in 1873

In 1873, Portland was a city of 12,000 people. \$250,000. The valuation of the entire city was estimated at \$9 million. Several large fires had already ravaged the city in it’s short history.

Saturday August 2, 1873 began another in a string of hot, dry, and windy days. While the origins are uncertain, the smoke from the fire was first detected at 4:30 AM. By the end of the day, 22 city blocks had been destroyed (the city stretched from approximately Burnside to Harrison and the River to 7th Avenue). The fire was of such significance that mutual aid from Salem was sent.

In the end, the dollar loss was set at



Safety Learning Center & Fire Museum Event Line 503-823-3616

Remember This???

Horseshoes are generally shaped like...well, horseshoes. Fire horses had different needs. The advent of cobblestone created a slippery-when-wet surface that gave many fire horses trouble with their footing. The solution was a horseshoe with a rubber insert in the heel. The picture shown here has the rubber insert, well hardened after about 100 years, but still intact. Stop by the Historic Belmont Firehouse and check out artifacts like this on display.

Do you have a memory to share for future issues? Submit them to Don Porth at the Belmont Firehouse for consideration. Contact can be made at 503-823-3615 or dporth@fire.ci.portland.or.us



Portland Fire History, Safety Learning Center Information, Foundation Background
Find it on the web at www.jeffmorrisfoundation.org



*** FIRE SALE ***

Treat your child to three alarms of fun with these pedal car fire engines available at the Belmont Firehouse Gift Shop. They come complete with fire bureau stickers to customize it to Portland Fire & Rescue. All proceeds support the Safety Learning Center & Fire Museum at the Belmont Firehouse. Clothing and safety items are also on sale.

Visit the Belmont Firehouse Gift Shop or shop on-line for the entire selection of clothing and gifts. All proceeds support the Safety Learning Center & Fire Museum.

www.jeffmorrisfoundation.org

Belmont Street Fair & "Safety Saturday" Return

Summer at the Historic Belmont Firehouse has been busy, but somewhat limited due to recent improvements to the Safety Learning Center. Business will kick up again in the fall, beginning with the **Belmont Street Fair** on Saturday September 6th. This is a wonderful community event showcasing the best the Belmont Community has to offer. The event and the Belmont Firehouse will be operating from 10 AM to 5 PM that day. The firehouse will feature tours and live music on the firehouse stage. The Street Fair also has a main stage with musical performances all day long. Trolley rides take you the length of the street and kids activities abound.

Safety Saturday took a hiatus over the summer but will return to it's normal second Saturday of the month schedule beginning September 13th. Hours of operation are 10 AM to 3 PM. Activities of the day will include tours of the firehouse, featuring the "Fire Engine Experience." Receive safety information directly from fire and life safety professionals on hand. The gift shop is also open and it's never too early to shop for that unique holiday gift.

Think Safe!

*** **Safety Learning Center & Fire Museum Event Line 503-823-3616** ***