

David Campbell Memorial Association

Portland Firefighter Memorial Plaza News

Issue 1
May 2022

The Portland Fire-fighter Memorial Plaza is a place of tribute to Fallen Fire Chief David Campbell combined with a memorial wall sharing the names of all Portland Fire-fighters who have given their lives in service. The public plaza will be a place of remembrance, reflection, and interpretation of the vigilance of Portland Fire & Rescue's service to Portland.

~~~~~  
**For Info contact**

**Don Porth,**  
**DCMA President 503-**  
**805-8482**

~~~~~  
PFMP
1850 SW Alder Street
Portland OR 97205

Dates of Importance

June 27th—Annual David Campbell Memorial Service
@ PFMP

August 2nd—The 169th Anniversary of Portland Fire and the 139th Anniversary of the great conflagration of Portland

How We Got Here...

Welcome to this first issue of Portland Firefighter Memorial Plaza News. We hope to keep you informed of the status of this important project. Your input is always welcomed as we develop this important historical, cultural, and memorial asset of the city of Portland.

The project to create a proper memorial to the fallen firefighters of Portland began in about 2010 as Fire Station 21 was completed on the East Bank of the Willamette River. A small plaza on Fire Bureau property that was somewhat of an extension of the Eastbank Esplanade parkway had been set aside on which to place this memorial. After years of inactivity, the project began in earnest. Unfortunately, time had allowed for change in various rules of development in floodplains and E-Zones of the city. Once reviewed, it became apparent that the plan in place for the site would need significant amendments to meet the current requirements of the site.

At the same time, a realization that the condition of the David Campbell Memorial in SW Portland had become dire. While the pandemic years were not the cause, they certainly did not help the matter. The idea came to light that perhaps a restoration of the David Campbell Memorial, coupled with the addition of the memorial features intended for the East Bank project might fit nicely into the triangle containing the David Campbell Memorial. This started an exploration that has become the new plan to accomplish both a restoration of our 94 year old David Campbell Memorial and the addition of the Fallen Firefighter Memorial.

The project is ambitious but has been embraced by community partners and other stakeholders across Portland, the region, and the nation. Since this is a community project, we wanted to create this newsletter to keep you informed of the progress, and welcome your involvement in this endeavor.

The David Campbell Memorial Association

In the wake of Chief Campbell's death in 1911, an effort immediately came forth to pay tribute to Chief Campbell. Two ideas resulted. One was to create a physical memorial, and the other to create a fund to help disabled firefighters. While it isn't known what happened to the latter idea, the plan to build a physical memorial, as we know, moved forward.

Community contributions came in. By 1913, a group was formed to manage the idea and help bring it to life. They were called the "David Campbell Memorial and Medal Fund." For those who do not know, the DCMA issues valor awards to Portland Firefighters who have distin-

guished themselves above and beyond the call of duty.

At some point later, the David Campbell Memorial and Medal Fund became an official non-profit organization under the name "David Campbell Memorial Association." They have continued to exist as a dedicated advocate for the care of the David Campbell Memorial and caretaker for the legacy of Portland Firefighters lost in service.

The DCMA is taking lead on the development of Portland Firefighter Memorial Plaza while continuing their efforts to recognize acts of valor among Portland Firefighters. They have also dedicated themselves to caretaking of the Firefighter's Section of Lone Fir Cemetery.

www.DavidCampbellMemorial.org

"David Campbell Memorial Association" on Facebook

Who Will Be Remembered On The Memorial?

The David Campbell Memorial was built as a tribute to Fire Chief David Campbell. By the time it was dedicated on June 26, 1928, seventeen Portland Firefighters had died in service to the citizens of Portland. David Campbell himself was the fifth Portland Firefighter to perish on the job. So who does that leave to be recognized?

Previously, the list of members was 36 in number. However, discoveries over the past 15 years as well as a changing perspective about what death on the job means has brought another 39 names to the table.

In the past, the Fire & Police Disability and Retirement Board had been the body that determined service connected or non-service connected deaths. Because their task is based on mandates contained in the City Charter of Portland, they must be objective and accurate in their distribution of public funds, including benefits to those who succumb to service connected death. Line of duty death fell into the same category, but was never a term used by FPD&R. Those members would be considered service connected in their demise.

Why did some members get LODD status while others did not? That is not known, but if one looks down the list of members who died of service connected causes, the list becomes larger, yet understandable.

The recent death of Lt. Jerry Richardson stands as a good example of the evolved thinking related to Line of Duty death. Jerry contracted cancer, on the job, three years before it would take his life. Documentation of when and how he contracted his cancer was certainly important. But his case is proof that service connected or line of duty death does not have to occur at the emergency scene. Jerry will be the 75th name to be added to the list of members who have died in service to the city of Portland. To see the entire list, visit www.DavidCampbellMemorial.org.

A Trip Back To 1931...

The current day image of the David Campbell Memorial is a bit different than what it looked like when built. It was originally flanked by streets on all three sides and was the lone feature in the triangle it rests within. The grassy area known as Portland Firefighter Park was added in 1963 when the surrounding streets were reconfigured by PBOT. The stone work had a coating added to it in the 1970s. This left the stone with a stucco-like texture that was not intended in the original design.

