

Portland Firefighter Memorial Plaza News

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The Portland Firefighter Memorial Plaza is a place of tribute to Fallen Fire Chief David Campbell combined with a memorial wall sharing the names of all Portland Firefighters 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.

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PFMP

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Dates of Importance

February 27, 1904—The first fireboat to serve the city of Portland would be commissioned. Named the "George Williams," the 105 foot 6 inch steam-driven vessel would protect the city for 23 years before being replaced by more modern craft in 1927.

DCMA Valor Medals

The David Campbell Memorial Association was founded on June 21, 1913 as the "David Campbell Memorial and Medal Fund." Their mission was to manage and expend funds on behalf of public donations for the yet-to-be-built David Campbell Memorial. They also decided to create valor awards for heroic acts by Portland Firefighters.

The Association had no idea when and how this project would take off but less than a year later, they would have to figure it out. On January 29, 1914 a fire would break out in a rooming house at the corner of First and Harrison Streets. The first arriving firefighters were Fire Chief Biddy Dowell along with his driver, Thomas Gavin. A man was trapped upstairs in the building. Not waiting for other crews to arrive, Gavin found a ladder and placed it against the second floor window and entered the burning building. He would carry a man named O. Eckland from the building, saving his life.

Gavin, who was a firefighter but assigned as an auto mechanic for Portland Fire, came to that position when Fallen Fire

Chief David Campbell purchased the first motorized vehicle in 1909, a Pierce Arrow sedan. Automobiles of the day were quite new and it was probably considered best practice to have the auto mechanic also serve as driver. Gavin was that person for Chief Campbell, then later Chief Dowell.

At the 1915 annual service to remember Chief Campbell, Gavin was given a certificate for his effort, promising to award him an actual medal when it was developed. At the 6th anniversary of the death of Chief Campbell, June 26, 1917, Thomas Gavin would receive the first David Campbell Gold Medal for his act of valor. Since that day, only one other gold medal has been awarded (2021).



Welcome to the new Commissioners

In the wake of the November elections, the DCMA now has two new partners to help bring the Portland Firefighter Memorial Plaza to life. Commissioner Rene Gonzalez has been assigned as the Commissioner of the Fire Bureau. He has already been busy getting familiar with the operations of the bu-

reau, traveling across the city to personally visit all fire stations. The Portland Bureau of Transportation, formerly under Commissioner Hardesty, has been moved to Commissioner Mingus Mapps. This is key to our project since the triangle property is under the authority of PBOT. PBOT is favorable to the project and is already providing great support.

www.DavidCampbellMemorial.org

"David Campbell Memorial Association" on Facebook

Portland Fire Fighters Pipes And Drums

If you've attended the David Campbell Memorial Service, held annually on June 26th, you've likely been witness to the Portland Fire Fighters Pipes and Drums band. They bring the traditions of the bagpipes, drums, marching, and meaningful ceremony to the event. Their stated mission is:

"To honor our fallen brothers and sisters in the emergency services through traditional pipes and drums music."

The band officially began their journey one night in January 2019, when a group of Portland fire-fighters gathered to hear Pipe Major and founder Greg Rose's vision for a fire band that would be Portland's own. Greg shared his dream of a large ensemble true to the musical traditions of the Scottish and to the culture of the fire service. Deeply inspired, the pioneers of this band got right to work.

The devoted members of the team have since given thousands of hours, learning and perfecting their craft. Today, they are fully prepared to operate as a large band, or in smaller teams when necessary.

If you have an event that might benefit from their presence, please visit their website at <https://portlandfirefighter-pipesanddrums.com>. They also accept donations for their all-volunteer efforts.



To Learn More...

The development of the Portland Firefighter Memorial Plaza continues to grow and evolve. You can find additional information on the "David Campbell Memorial Association" Facebook Page. This also includes other important information about safety and health issues faced by today's firefighters.

The David Campbell Memorial Association web site is another source of information. Find it at DavidCampbellMemorial.org. And to speak to a member of the David Campbell Memorial Association, contact Don Porth, President, 503-805-8482 or Don@PreventThink.com

