

Before the Bay Roberts Fire Department

Mr. J. Mercer remembered a time when there was no Fire Department. He stated that...
“Generally fires in a community were a matter of great concern to many or all citizens. Often people lost their homes and even their lives when fires occurred, prior to the establishment of the Fire Department. The citizens in order to protect themselves, their homes and others property they endeavoured to combat a fire by a “*bucket-brigade*” methods. Most everyone in a community, they, the very young and the very old, grabbed a bucket, formed a line from the nearest source of water to the fire. They then began filling the buckets and passing them along the line until they reached the last person who threw the water on the fire. This process continued until the fire was extinguished or burnt itself out. This type of system was in affect until the establishment of the Bay Roberts Fire Brigade in 1942. As the years passed, better methods for fire fighting have been found. Fire engines, fire trucks with ladders equipped with water hoses and water containers have been a more efficient means for fire prevention.”

Fires before the establishment of the Bay Roberts Volunteer Fire Department

Monday

August 11, 1845 Shocking Accident On Saturday morning last between the hours of 6 and 7, a house belonging to a person named WILLIAM CALLAHAN at Bay Robert's (south ridge) took fire from a pitch pot which had been incautiously placed upon the heart to boil, and in a few minutes the whole edifice was wrapped in flames. The family with great difficulty effected their escape, with the exception of a girl aged 12 or 13 years, who was sleeping above stairs, and who in the confusion was neglected till all efforts to rescue her proved utterly fruitless. Her remains were afterwards discovered among the ruins of the building. CALLAHAN himself was severely burned.

Friday, February 16, 1917 The little five year old boy of Edward and Edith SNOW of the Broad, South River, was burned so badly about the body on Wednesday, February 7th, that he passed away the same night. The father rose early to go into the country for wood, the little one following him into the kitchen. Mr. Snow lit the fire, then went to the stables to feed his horse. During the father's absence the child's clothing caught fire, before assistance arrived, his little body was burned. It was only 2 or 3 winters ago the parent suffered the loss of a little four year old girl, through drowning.

Friday, June 15, 1923

Mrs. WILLIAM JAMES, of Georgetown, Brigus, died at her home on June 13th. It seems that Mrs. James lit a fire in the yard for the purpose of heating water and in moving around the fire her clothing caught. Before assistance came to her she was so badly burned that medical skill was to no avail, she passed away the following day.

The Coroner was informed, by letter from Mr. GOSS, Spaniard's Bay, that a child of John CHIPMAN had accidentally caught fire and was so burned that it died two hours afterwards. The parties were referred to Charles COZENS, Esq., in whose District the accident happened

Friday, April 17, 1931

The funeral of Mrs. Michael POWER and her five children, all victims of the fire which destroyed the Power home, at Shearstown, early Saturday morning last, took place Sunday afternoon. The bodies which were gathered from the ruins by a group of men under the direction of Head Constable Dwyer, were wrapped in sheets and enclosed in one large coffin. The procession wended its way solemnly to the R.C. cemetery where the committal service was held and the remains laid to rest. Mr. Michael Power, husband and father of last Saturday's victims was taken to the General Hospital on Sunday last to receive medical attention.

The rest of the fire reports can be view from the links of fire/accidents calls that are listed below.