

'Fire & Ice' Fireman's Muster take place at Old Sturbridge Village

Includes antique fire engines, bucket brigades, chili fest, vintage ice cream making

STURBRIDGE — Firefighters get half-price admission to the third annual "Fire and Ice" old-fashioned fireman's muster set for Sat. July 17 at Old Sturbridge Village. Activities include a procession of antique fire pumps, bucket brigade contests, pumping competitions, and hand-made ice cream demonstrations. Area restaurants will compete in the Best Chili in History contest, and visitors can sample the chili and vote for the winner. For information: www.osv.org; 1-800-733-1830.

In addition to vintage fire

trucks from the 1920s and 30s, antique hand-pump fire engines, called "hand tubs," will be on display and others will be used in pumping competitions. Pulled by firefighters, hand-pumpers required many volunteers to pump the long side handles up and down, drawing water from the machine's tub to spray on fires. First developed in the 1700s, these "hand tubs" were a huge improvement over the bucket brigade method of fighting fires and were used for nearly 100 years.

Old Sturbridge Village food historians will demonstrate 18th- and 19th-century ice

cream making methods using popular "receipts" or recipes of those periods. According to OSV historians, ice cream has a long history.

Before refrigeration, ice cream was reserved for the rich and the royal because ice was so rare and expensive. The Romans made "sweet snow" and Europeans favored "water ice" in the 1660s and added cream to the recipe. Ice cream in America dates to 1744, and became more popular with the masses after the hand-crank ice cream machine was patented by Nancy Johnson in 1846.

Old Sturbridge Village celebrates New England life in the 1830s and is open daily 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. seven days a week. Parking is free and visitors get a free second-day return visit within 10 days. Admission: \$20; seniors \$18; children 3-17, \$7; children under 3, free. For information: www.osv.org or call 1-800-733-1830.



Submitted photo

Two men pull an antique fire engine along the streets of Old Sturbridge Village.

