



Riverview Fire and Rescue moved its vehicles outside Saturday to make room for the pancake breakfast and official opening of the new fire hall.

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# Riverview fire hall built for the future

**Thousands attend open house to officially open new facility**

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Anyone thinking Riverview residents are not excited about their new, state-of-the-art fire station had those thoughts put to rest on Saturday.

Residents of Riverview and surrounding areas packed the new fire hall, located at the corner of Pinewood and Pine Glen roads, for the day-long official opening event. An astounding 3,000 to 3,500 people are estimated to have visited the facility to take advantage of tours, treats and gifts for the children and the colourful ceremonies.

"It has been like this since early this morning," said Ward 1 Coun. Ron Davis. So many people showed up for the pancake breakfast, supplied by the Riverview Lions Club, they had to send out for extra supplies to keep up with it.

In fact, the Lions had to eventually cut the number of breakfasts off at the 1,500 mark. But they were back in the afternoon, barbecuing hot dogs for the visitors.

"It is good to see all the children here," said Davis, noting balloons, red plastic fire caps, book markers and treats were provided for the youngsters by the fire department and other groups. "It is a real family day."

The children were even given the opportunity to sit behind the wheel of the big fire trucks. "But they didn't let me ride it," noted five-year-old Kyle Branson, the son of Chris and Adriana Branson of Riverview. Their other son Ethan, also sporting a red fire cap, held up three fingers when asked his



Photo at left shows Sharon Van Der Flaet standing on a chair to get a picture of the official opening cake. Above right, Brooke Duffy, 4, looks over the gear inside one of the Riverview fire trucks.



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age. Krista Mitchell of Riverview said the visit to the fire hall was a special treat for her two-year-old son Brendon, who was holding a balloon, one of many supplied to the children Saturday by the Muscular Dystrophy Association of Canada. She had recently read him a story, she said, about a little boy visiting a fire station and getting to drive the trucks.

Stacey Anderson-Weldon, accompanied by her daughter Kate, also two, said she never expected to see so many people at the fire hall's official opening. "It is very exciting; it is overwhelming," she said.

After 44 years on Coverdale Road, Riverview and Rescue moved on Jan. 12, 2004 to the new fire station.

When the Coverdale Road sta-

tion was constructed in 1961, it was an ideal location, said Fire Chief Doug Hamer. At that time, he explained, it was the Parish of Coverdale Fire Department (there was no Town of Riverview, then) and it was responsible for providing fire services for that section of Albert County.

Today, said Hamer, the department's prime responsibility is the Town of Riverview and the firefighters need a site closer to the centre of the community. "It allows us to respond to emergencies all around Riverview quicker and makes it easier for our volunteers and off-duty firefighters to get to the station."

The official opening ceremonies, which were emceed by David Crase, one of Riverview's volunteer firefighters, featured an honour guard from the Riverview

Vets and Armed Forces Association, in their uniforms carrying flags and banners, being piped up to the stage by the 292 Coverdale Sea Cadets band. The cadets are sponsored by the Riverview Lions Club.

Mayor Clarence Sweetland said the new fire hall involved five years of planning and one year of construction. He said a committee of the firefighters, headed by Hamer, determined the design of the facility that would best meet the community's needs.

The mayor said he recently saw a picture of the design for a new fire station they are building in Fredericton. "I couldn't help but notice how much it looks like our new station, but then, again, planners of the Fredericton station made a few trips our new facility. So, they must have been impressed

by what they saw.

"This new station represents the spirit of growth taking place in Riverview," said Sweetland. "I am very excited to come and see this beautiful building, knowing what it means for our community," said Deputy Mayor Ann Seamans. "When we got the east-west corridor road completed, its location will be even more ideal for the community," she said.

"I am very, very proud of our new fire hall facility," said Ward 2 Coun. Bill McBeath. He said the firefighters and fire chief had a major input into the final result, so that it was built "not just for today, but for the future."

On hand for the ceremonies were Moncton-Riverview-Dieppe MP Claudette Bradshaw, Energy Minister Bruce Fitch, Public Safety Minister Wayne Stinson and other councillors and firefighters. Stoves presented a couple of plaques to Hamer and the town on behalf of his department's appreciation for the new station.

Also on hand for the event were two original members of the 1961 Coverdale Fire Department — Albert McEachern and Everett MacLennan.

And how could you officially open a new fire hall without the presence of a Dalmanst? Provincial Fire Marshal John C. McLaughlin of Fredericton solved that problem by bringing his dog to the event.

Shortly after he was appointed fire marshal three years ago, McLaughlin said his wife and children gave him the Dalmanst for Father's Day. They looked over several names for the dog before settling on Quincy.

Although they did not know it at the time, it turns out that Quincy, Mass., is the headquarters of the National Fire Protection Association, which sets standards for fire departments around the world, said the fire marshal.