

**FIRE PROTECTION HISTORY-PART 79: 1913
(THE NATIONAL FIRE PREVENTION CONVENTION)**

By Richard Schulte

The first National Fire Prevention Convention was held in Philadelphia in 1913. The following is an excerpt from the "Official Record" of the Convention addressing the purpose of the meeting:

***"The National Fire Prevention
Convention
Held at Philadelphia, Oct. 13th to 18th, Inclusive***

***FIRST DAY, OPENING SESSION
Monday, October 13th, 1913***

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a. m. by Director Porter as follows:

I want to impress upon you my personal appreciation of your presence here, coming as you do from all over the country; and my pleasure in opening a meeting of such importance to Philadelphia, to Pennsylvania, and to the country at large. I consider it an honor to act as temporary chairman of this meeting.

We have with us men of such caliber that they may really mold the opinions which controls such a vast subject as this.

At the outset I will read to you the General Preamble and Resolutions calling this Convention.

I have before me letters to Mr. Evans from all members of the Committee on Resolutions, approving these and the entire program.

"Whereas: American fire waste of life and property has for many years been a heavy burden on the whole people; and,

Whereas: The cost of fire insurance and protection cannot materially decrease except as the fire waste falls; and

Whereas: A large proportion of this fire waste is admittedly preventable and controllable by concerted State and municipal regulation; and

Whereas: American states and municipalities now occupy no common ground and follow no common policy and have no clearinghouse for concerted uniform action to prevent and control fire waste (which is a common peril and expense);

Therefore, This National Fire Prevention Convention has been called for the following purposes:

- 1. To consider the physical, moral, legal, legislative, and administrative means to control and reduce fire danger to life and property in America (discussion of the fire insurance underwriting problem being limited to its effective relations to the above-defined program); and*
- 2. To initiate a completely developed movement to educate the public about fire danger and waste; and to study, prepare, get enacted and continuously enforced, everywhere throughout the country, appropriate minimum legal requirements to protect life and property from fire—by organizing municipal branches and from them State associations, and from them a National agency (preferably through the National Fire Protection Association—enlarged in purpose and membership, acting through its new Committee on Public Information).”*

Is there any objection? (Pause.) If not, we will let these Resolutions stand.”

Source: “Official Record of the First American National Fire Prevention Convention”, Powell Evans, Editor, page 120, 1914.

<http://books.google.com/books?id=bwIOAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=inauthor:%22American+National+Fire+Prevention+Convention.+1st,+Philadelphia,+1913%22&hl=en&sa=X&ei=-RnLUJqkFefdyAGkxoHwBw&ved=0CD4Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false>

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