

Oldest firehouse to get new lease on life

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(Historic Boston Inc.)

The firehouse -- and the men of Torrent Six -- in better days.

By Meghan Irons, Globe Staff

Built in 1859, it once served as the home of the fire company known as Torrent Six. From 1919 to 1950, it was home to the local chapter of Spanish American War Veterans. It was used briefly by the city park department in the 1950s.



The firehouse today

Since then, it has fallen into disrepair. But now the Eustis Street Fire House will get a new lease on life. Historic Boston Inc., a private nonprofit that works to preserve historic sites in the city, plans to rehabilitate the Dudley Square building and move there from downtown, making the heart of Roxbury its home.

The firehouse at Eustis and Washington streets is

Boston's oldest remaining fire station building. It's noted for its small size and ornate Italian decoration.

Historic Boston, which was formed around saving the Old Corner Bookstore on the Freedom Trail, said much of its work in saving historic buildings in downtown Boston is done.

In recent years, the group's efforts have focused on the city's neighborhoods.

"By moving our operations to Dudley Square, we make the firehouse's redevelopment feasible and bring HBI closer to its mission of neighborhood preservation," said Kathy Kottaridis, who heads Historic Boston.

Construction of the firehouse is expected to begin in November. Historic Boston expects to move there in the fall of 2010.