

UP CLOSE & PRACTICAL

The Light Still Burns

by Larry Briney



Is there any more reassuring line than the one a nationwide motel chain uses: "We'll leave the light on for you."

In fact there is a light that has been on since 1901. It's in a fire station in Livermore, California.

"Don't worry, the light is still burning" is the headline that greets visitors to the home page, centennialbulb.org, the web site dedicated to keeping track of the world's longest burning light bulb.

The oversized, orange-tinted, hand-blown light bulb was first illumined at the Livermore fire station in 1901.

The owner of Livermore Power and Light and the manufacturer of the light bulb donated the bulb to the fire hall so that when the fire alarm sounded in the middle of the night the firemen would not have to stumble around in the dark.

With only a 4-watt filament, it wasn't exactly a dazzling display of light. But the bulb made it possible for the firefighters to get out of the hall to fight fires without fumbling in the dark to light their kerosene lamps.

The longevity of the Livermore Light stems from three factors. First, it has very low wattage. Second, it has not been constantly turned on and off. In fact, it has been turned off only three times during the 107 years it has been burning.

Third, and perhaps most importantly, it was manufactured with a perfect seal.

This means that the vacuum has been maintained over these many years, which keeps the filament from disintegrating.

In order to safeguard the bulb, the "Livermore Light" now has its own generator AND back-up generator. It also has a protective cage around it.

I remember as a teenager how it was embarrassing and annoying to have my parents "wait up" for me to get home from a night-out. They would keep the porch light on until I was home safely.

But I also remember after a few times when I was alone how bleak and barren it was to come home night after night to a darkened front door and dark, empty rooms.

These are dark days. The economy, politics, terrorism, "global warming," and prevailing materialism all make for a spiritual darkness that brings despair to many.

Except – The light is still burning – and has for 2000 years! And it has its own power source, independent of the world, in God Himself. It's not fragile and there's no cage around it.

Life itself was in him (Jesus Christ), and this life gives light to everyone. The light shines through the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it. John 1:4-5

The light is still burning to show the way for everyone to come to Jesus – and the darkness cannot put it out!