



2022 Indiana Chapter Annual Report Forest Fire Lookout Association

MEMBERSHIP: The Indiana Chapter has 4 current members. We have been combined with the Illinois Chapter for a couple years but that was when Joe Mirabelli was interested in working with me as a co-chair and working on finding members and doing projects in Illinois. I have not been able to reach Joe by email or phone in over a year, and he has not renewed his membership. I am not sure what to do about the Illinois Chapter. It currently has 7 members. Three of those members are likely to drop. We lost two members in 2022 – one from each state. The balance for the two states is \$173.

CURRENT CHAPTER OFFICERS: Teena Ligman, Director

PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES:

I have continued my quest to see and climb all the towers in Indiana- you wouldn't think it would be a hard job since we don't have so many but I do it when I'm in an area so its taking me awhile. My granddaughters continue to enjoy checking out towers when they're along with me.

I also gave a program at the Lawrence County Museum – they have historical programs most months. I had offered to do this earlier and they had to cancel the program due to weather so I finally was able to give it. I had a good crowd and people loved it. For a few weeks after the program people were calling or stopping me in town to tell me how much they enjoyed it. They also filmed my program and posted it on their site so its available for other people to watch. Here's a link. I always talk too fast but had some people in the audience sharing stories which was nice. One woman you can't hear well is talking about the Georgia Fire in 1964 when they came and got all the high school boys, some of the girls were taken out of school to take water and food around to the fire fighters and she got to do that so she was sharing her memories. Sorry for the gap when my program mis-fired and I had to reboot.

Here is the link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U4AdiZwf59I>

Towers Visited in 2022

Cincinnati Tower – I'll start with a hard luck tower. This one is on the corner of a crossroads, on private land. I don't know if it used to be a small piece of public land that was sold or why it is there but its on a high point. One of the men at the museum program said he grew up in the little crossroads community of Cincinnati and his little friend's dad was the towerman of the Cincinnati Tower and he and his friend used to climb



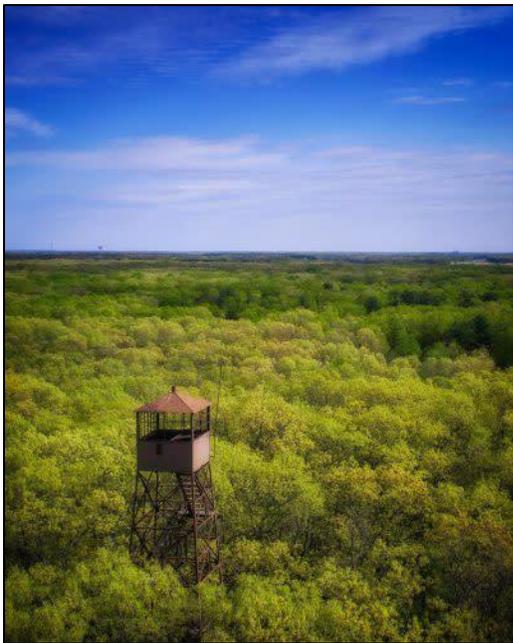
the tower a lot and take lunch up to his buddy's dad. But the tower hadn't been used in years and now- I stopped and asked permission to walk up and take a picture and the man in the house said it was okay- just don't get too close and don't try to climb it- it was pretty dangerous. I agree it was! The cab roof is missing and the whole thing looks pretty rickety. This tower likely won't be around much longer.

Willow Valley Tower – (Shown at right) This tower has had some work done to it, several steps replaced and feels solid, the part of this tower that is worrisome is how bad the woven wire fence safety barriers around the stairs is (Shown in the photo to lower right). It just looks pretty scary to me. But the tower feels safe as long as you hold onto the rail climbing the stairs and don't fall you should be safe. This tower has a big platform part way up to gather and take a break. Don't see that very often. Great views from the top of the tower!



Winemac Tower at Tippecanoe River State Park – This tower is one of the only towers in the north part of the state. It is in good shape. Interestingly you have to hike in ways from a parking lot and the

main trail by the tower is a horse trail. There are hitching posts below the tower for equestrians riding by to tie up their horses and take a break and climb the tower. The amenities are complete with mounting blocks to get on and off your horse!





Ouabache Tower – I’ve written about this tower before (shown above) -it was rehabilitated by funds raised by the community and is lit up every year for Christmas and Choreographed with Christmas music to “dance” with lights to Christmas tunes. It’s a beautiful tower and is set on a nice, paved site above a recreational lake and across the road from a pasture where they keep bison. I had heard about this tower but never been to visit it, but I was very impressed. It very well done. I couldn’t get a photo of the bison from the top of the tower because they were all laying in the shade. ☹️





Lincoln City Tower at Lincoln State Park - This is Indiana's tallest tower at 120 feet. Built by the CCC like most of Indiana towers this tower is in good condition and well used by park visitors to Abraham Lincoln's Boyhood home.

Most of the Indiana DNR towers I've visited have the same or similar interpretive signs now.



ere's an example of the signage.

FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES: No financial or fundraising activities in 2020.

OBJECTIVES FOR 2023:

My objectives are carried over from previous years

- I still hope to do some interviews of former towermen, their widows or old firefighters- though as the years go by, I'm losing those opportunities and have lost track of some of the possibilities I earlier knew of. If I get a good story, I'll write a story for the magazine.
- I want to continue to get around to all the towers. If any are not on the register I need to get them on it!
- Work with the State Parks and Forests in the state to generate an inventory of needed work on towers as I do this assessment. Also work with them on publicity as I spoke about in the beginning – doing a promotion to encourage people to visit lookout towers in 2023.
- Offer to give programs on lookout towers like what I did at the Lawrence County Museum.
- Generate more interest and members for IFLA.

2022 Indiana Tower Statistics:

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| • Total lookout towers in chapter: | 15 (possibly only 14) Still have not verified |
| • Lookout Towers on National Register | 9 |
| • Towers in active service: | 0 |
| • Towers in rental program | 0 |
| • Towers needing significant repairs | Unsure |
| • Towers hopelessly dilapidated | 2 – possibly more |
| • Towers converted to alternate function | Many are used for radio/repeaters/antennas |
| • Towers schedule to be removed | None known |
| • Complete new tower under construction | 0 |

2021 Illinois Tower Statistics -Not updated this year.

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| • Total lookout towers in chapter: | 3? |
| • Lookout Towers on National Register | 3 |
| • Towers in active service: | 0 |
| • Towers in rental program | 0 |
| • Towers needing significant repairs | Unsure |
| • Towers hopelessly dilapidated | Unsure |
| • Towers converted to alternate function | |
| • Towers schedule to be removed | None known |
| • Complete new tower under construction | 0 |

Respectfully submitted:

Teena Ligman, Indiana Chapter Chair
11 January 2023