

# FOREST FIRE LOOKOUT ASSOCIATION



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## Indiana CHAPTER

### 2013 ANNUAL REPORT

**MEMBERSHIP:** The Indiana Chapter unfortunately lost membership in 2013 and were down to four paid members, however I talked to one member who had dropped and he's agreed to pay his dues. I will continue to try to recruit more members.

**ENDING BALANCE:** \$42

**RESTORATION:** Nothing major that I am aware of. We did repaint the Hickory Ridge tower to cover up the graffiti but vandals have already painted new graffiti on the sides again. ☹

**ACTIVITIES:** Interviews were done with three former tower men. The interview with Don Meeks and his experience digging the holes for the footers for the Cataract Tower and his memories of his brother being its first towerman was written up in the FFLA magazine. I have an extensive interview of two other towermen: Bill Coomer and Harold Lynch which I still need to write up in article form and submit. It was an excellent interview of how Forest Service towers and fire detection worked in the late 1950's through the 70s.

In June, *Outdoor Indiana*, the Indiana DNR magazine which features natural resource issues of interest to Indiana residents did a cover story and excellent write up on fire towers. The article was twelve pages long with many colored photos. Both the front and back cover of the May/June magazine had photos of Indiana lookout towers! Members Dennis Goen, Jeremy Kolaks, and Teena Ligman were interviewed for the article.

In November, the PBS station in Bloomington did a feature on lookout towers and covered the Hickory Ridge Lookout. They interviewed Dennis Goen and Teena Ligman at the tower and had a segment on two different evenings as well as posted it on their website. They also send the segment to other PBS affiliates in Indiana.

Photographs were added of each of the Forest Service historical lookout towers to the link for Indiana lookouts linked to the FFLA site. Visitors can click and view whatever pictures I could find for the Hoosier NF lookout towers – some were photos of the towers themselves, others were aerial shots of the towers, and some were pictures from the top of the towers.

**Lookout News:** After the *Outdoor Indiana* article someone requested that the Tippecanoe Tower, which was mentioned in the story be added to the Lookout Registry, so that tower was researched and nominated. Nothing has been received yet to know if it was approved.

## **PLAN OF WORK FOR 2013;**

- Recruit more members.
- Hope to interview additional tower men who served in the 1950s-1960s. I know of at least two others but have not been able to set up interviews.
- I received information on two possible tower locations, with cornerstones and what remains of foundations but have not investigated or confirmed these sites. One is the Valeene Tower, which we know existed, and the other is a tower on a hill above what is now Springs Valley Lake where I have no documentation of a tower at that location but the man said he has an old map that shows a lookout may have stood there. I would like to research more of the old tower sites.
- Still would like to generate an inventory of needed work on towers and update the information on towers that we currently have.
- Bev Stout with IDNR said she'll try to get pictures from the state of lookout towers on state and private land to add to the website as well.

**Respectfully submitted:** Teena Ligman, Chapter Chair  
9 January 2014