



FOREST FIRE LOOKOUT ASSOCIATION THE KEYSTONE CHAPTER

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ANNUAL REPORT - 2004

01/13/05

Dr. Keith Argow, Chairman, (&
Ladies & Gentlemen,

(Membership) The Keystone, (Pennsylvania) Chapter has 21 Members at this time. We note with regret that during the past year we lost one of our original Chapter Members, Mr. Dixon Miller, through natural causes. In his nineties, Dixon was the last Pennsylvania Fire Tower Operator, living on site at the Pohopoco Tower Ground Cabin, and reside at a fire tower ground cabin.

(Finances) In the hands of the National Treasurer re. Newsletter Mailing, et al, a balance of \$ 206.20. Local, at-home costs are being carried by the Director, and a zero balance is shown. *4/16/04 12/31/04*

(National Historic Lookout Register) The Silver Creel Tower was added to the Register during 2004, bringing to ten the number of Pennsylvania Towers listed. (Silver Creek Tower is in the Weiser Forest District # 18, and is a State owned, State operated Tower on State Forest Lands.)

Several towers are currently being considered for or are in various stages of being nominated for the Register. It is anticipated that the Hopewell Fire Tower, (Valley Forge District 17), will be among the first for which action is taken in 2005. The Hopewell Tower was the site of the first FFLA Meeting, in January 1990, (fifteen persons, five states represented).

(Projects) The anticipated State-wide approval of the Adopt-A-Tower Program was not accomplished in 2004, and action by the Bureau of Forestry is expected early in 2005.

The Chapter provided speaker, display and sales stand at the Reading Outdoor Festival in March, 2004. FFLA participation, including meals and lodging, was sponsored by the Reading Fire & Rescue Department.

The Contact & Research Station, shared by the PA Forest Fire Museum Assn. and FFLA, an all volunteer operation, had a sign placed on the property in 2004, courtesy of the PA Bureau of Forestry. The sign features the Museum logo.

Programs, talks, etc., which included both the FFLA and Museum display items, took place in three Counties, other than one noted previously, and all were Bureau of Forestry events.

(News, Updates) The CCC-built Ground Cabin at the former Cornwall Tower site is being restored with private funds and our Director is consultant on the project, on call as needed.

The Keystone Trails Assn. has not completed any formal agreement with the Bureau of Forestry, but continues to work for a cessation of tower removals pending a State-wide review of policy re. remaining towers, alternative use, etc.

Annual Report, Keystone Chapter, Continued...

(News, Updates, Continued) The Mount Penn Tower, (Reading), has seen continued restoration efforts. Removal of steel protective doors and replacement by doors reflecting original installation is now viewed as a mistake as new wooden doors were smashed by vandals soon after newspaper notice of the change.

A resident of the Cornwall Tower site during World War Two has contributed to the collection of people data for the upcoming publication of the book, 'The Sentinels.' Publication is being delayed for the collection of more personal 'people' information. With FFLA Members being asked to help, this project is primarily a Spear-Cummings effort at this time. Notable assistance has been provided by Members in and outside of Pennsylvania, including Isenburg, Keller, Ritter, and others.

(Tower Inventory) There are currently 45 standing State-owner fire towers in Pennsylvania, with 27 in service or available for service. Some of these are on private-lease lands. At least 8 additional towers are in private hands and at least 3 are in municipal hands. 2 towers are known to have been sold and moved out of State.

(Expectations) Efforts continue to find a new Director for the Chapter.

One meeting with Appalachian Trail Representatives is planned, and additional sessions are anticipated re. cooperative planning along 400' Trail Corridor. The PA Forest Fire Museum Assn. is a participant and is a partner in all Tower efforts in the Commonwealth.

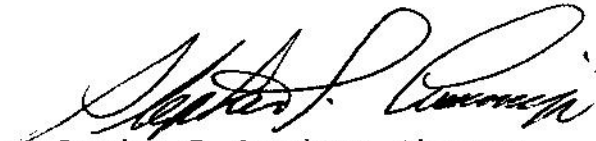
A donated computer office system is expected to go into service for data collection only, at the Contact & Research Station.

Clerical help is being sought to assist in auditing and filing of FFLA data accumulated during the fifteen years of existence of the organization.

The PA Forest Fire Museum Association has approved the costs of purchase of a dehumidifier for the shared collections area of the C & R Station.

The consortium of outdoor and hiking organizations comprising the Keystone Trails Association, is providing some early indicators of local interest in scattered areas of the State. Some movement in local areas regarding towers is being encouraged by the books being sold regarding New York State towers, and by the word spreading of local group efforts in New York State with towers. It is also anticipated that this will cause an increase in Chapter Memberships.

Respectfully submitted,



Stephen J. Cummings, Director
Keystone, (Pennsylvania) Chapter
Forest Fire Lookout Association

Congratulations to us all, on our Fifteenth Year Anniversary of our organization!