



## FOREST FIRE LOOKOUT ASSOCIATION THE KEYSTONE CHAPTER

2533 Falling Spring Road  
Chambersburg, PA 17202 - 9020

Annual Report  
01/06/10

Dr. Keith A. Argow, National Chairman  
&  
Members, The Keystone Chapter  
The Forest Fire Lookout Association

Ladies & Gentlemen, Greetings!

On January 16, we celebrate our twentieth birthday as an organization as we began as an organized group on the weekend of the Martin Luther King Anniversary, in 1990, at the Hopewell Fire Control Station, site of the Hopewell Fire Tower, here in Pennsylvania. (Berks County, French Creek State Park.) Doubtless few knew at that time the potential that lay ahead for the Association, and what would be accomplished! Eleven people from five States, most of whom are still active, joined together for that first meeting.

### The Keystone Report

(Membership) Nineteen members are currently on the roster. Several residents of Ohio have transferred to the recently formed Ohio Chapter.

(Finance) Five hundred and sixty-two dollars and fifty-four cents in Chapter funds are available in the hands of the National Treasurer at this time. Funds held locally from occasional book sales have been sufficient to handle postal costs and Association dues to our partnering group, the PA Forest Fire Museum Assn.

(Projects) The first in a series of booklets regarding Pennsylvania fire towers has been published and is being sold at two dollars each, plus postage. The development of the second issue was interrupted by the passing of the author, Merl Waltz. We are currently seeking someone who will take on the organizing of the next in the series. The first dealt with the Buchanan Forest District in South Central Pennsylvania. The project is a joint effort of FFLA and the PA Forest Fire Museum Assn. The intent is to elicit local input from each area covered, before the publication of a major work on all of Pennsylvania.

The Forest Fire Museum Assn. is expected to open a small museum at Caledonia State Park in 2010. One of the four display areas will be devoted to fire towers. Since one of the topics for which the most inquiries are received is that of fire towers, both FFLA and Museum files on fire towers will be placed there. These collections have been together for several years. The 1914 steel segment of the Piney Mountain Tower, known to many FFLA folks will be included, as well as models, photos, etc.

(The National Historic Lookout Register) There are currently eleven fire towers in Pennsylvania on the Register. The most recent, in 2009, is the Wheeler Tower, (Federal), which apparently was nominated by a source outside of our Chapter membership as we have no information as yet on this listing, though we seek it.

Action on other nominations has been intentionally delayed, awaiting the final report of the PA Fire Tower Task Force, appointed by the Division of Forest Fire

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(01/06/10 Keystone Chapter Report, Continued.)

'Protection, PA Bureau of Forestry. The Task Force, made up of a cross section of management and staff personnel, both working and retired, and including FFLA representation, is at last report, awaiting the final engineering studies before concluding its recommendations on use, save and remove guidelines and actions. At least three standing State towers are being considered for NHLR nomination at this time, pending that expected TF report.

(Current) Word just in is that the Port Clinton Tower, (Weiser Forest District 18), was heavily damaged in late Summer, 2009. This is the tower formerly staffed by longtime FFLA member Chuck Helms. Chuck is currently assigned to the Bear's Head Tower during fire season.

Both the Bureaus of State Parks and Forestry in the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources experienced cutbacks in seasonal employment during 2009 due to budget concerns. It is not yet clear how much or how many will be the case in 2010 as there are still budget issues being worked on, at the top.

It is believed that forest and wildfire figures for 2009 will yet go up, but figures available at this time indicate 636 fires and acreage burned at 6,074. That looks like quick detection and fast response to me, but there were some big ones.

Best wishes to all hands, sincerely,



Stephen J. Cummings, Director  
Keystone Chapter,  
&  
Chairman, Emeritus  
Forest Fire Lookout Association, (International).

cc: E. Peter Barr  
W. David Bula  
Brad. Eells  
Gary Weber  
Henry Isenberg  
Robert Spear  
Mark Haughwout  
John Miller, PBF.DCNR

P.S. I believe it is important to note that continuing cooperation and assistance to our research efforts in Pennsylvania regarding our maybe five hundred fire towers and lookout sites is coming from FFLA people outside of our Chapter, including but certainly not limited to the famous three - Mark Haughwout, Henry Isenberg and Robert, (Bob) Spear. THANK YOU!

