



**Forest Fire Lookout Association
New York State Chapter
May 2018**

Remembering our History and Planning for our Future will be the theme of our upcoming conference.

At our Northeastern Conference, speakers will discuss:

- How to preserve fire towers via the National Historic Designation, by Ed Engleman
- Picking up the pieces and putting a tower back together again, by Barry Knight
- Forward thinking in preserving all of the towers in the Catskills under one umbrella, yet allowing them to function independently, by George Profous
- How the historic towers continue to be useful for fire spotting purposes, by Ray Grimes
- How to connect with the next generation through local school programs, by Laurie Rankin
- Defining Forestry in the 21st century, by Ryan Trapani

We will be visiting several fire towers during the weekend! Breakfast and Lunch are included with the registration fee. Information and registration: <http://ffla.org/conferences--events.html>

Pennsylvania has taken a new and somewhat old fashioned approach to spotting fire towers.
<https://stateimpact.npr.org/pennsylvania/2019/05/10/with-new-lookout-towers-pennsylvania-goes-old-school-to-detect-wildfires/>

News from Around the State

Red Hill Fire Tower: On Saturday, May 4th, Doug Hamilton the Coordinator at Red Hill, held a volunteer luncheon at the Claryville Fire Hall to thank all those who give so much to the fire tower. About 25 people were in attendance, including the local Forest Ranger, Howard Kreft, and NYSDEC Forester George Profous, who will be speaking at our conference. Discussions were held about Red Hill's 100th Anniversary that will be celebrated next year. Here is some excellent Drone footage taken of the tower. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qT4QhITNwag&feature=youtu.be>

Azure: Azure Mountain Friends are currently reviewing the submissions for their \$750 scholarships awards. To be considered, students must submit a brief essay (250 words) on “Why I would like to be an AMF Summit Steward for five days in the summer.” Each year as funds allow, the Friends group offers this scholarship to three college-bound high school seniors from area high schools or current college students. Scholarship winners are then expected to serve as summit stewards at the restored fire tower on five separate weekend days between Memorial Day Weekend and Columbus Day 2019. Winners will be trained by experienced stewards.

Poke O Moonshine: Friends of Poke O Moonshine welcome new fire tower steward Thomas Gamsjager for the 2019 season. Tom brings lots of experience to his role and will be on duty Thursdays through Mondays from June 14th to August 25th.

St. Regis: Here is an update on some monumental work. From Doug F. - “The braces are all installed. The contractor and I went up last Sunday to make sure everything made it through the winter. He and his crew worked an additional three long days, hiking up and down in the dark. I worked with them two of the days. We had a few other volunteers helping too. They finished [the 3rd night] at 7:30 PM, then hiked out. We hope to fly the tools and maybe the old braces off the summit on Thursday.” THANK YOU!

Deadline Approaches: The deadline for the 20th Annual Hudson Valley River Ramble is June 7th. Is a hike to your fire tower one of the events? [Click here.](#)

Hadley: Friends of Hadley report - “We had our spring trail work day this past Saturday. Many thanks to Jud, Jackie, Jake, and Linda for their hard work. We cleaned and repaired all the water bars on the way up, and then got the Observer's Cabin ready to be opened up shortly. Back in late November, I got word that the tower cabin and observer's cabin had both been broken into. I went up and repaired them both, and didn't find anything amiss. Saturday we discovered that the vandals stole the brand new cot out of the cabin. This is the second one that has been stolen. The vandals had brought a lot of tools with them, and had spent a lot of time and energy breaking in. They also had to carry the cot back down the mountain. They probably could have spent the same amount of energy working at a job and bought a cot. Don't they realize that it is just volunteers and donations that are buying these items and repairing their mischief?”



Jackie Jones: Someone seriously vandalized the newly refurbished Jackie Jones fire tower. The Park took immediate action to make repairs.

Ferncliff: With a HUGE THANK YOU to Margaret A., we were able to spend Earth Day painting over significant graffiti on Ferncliff Fire Tower. Thank you Margaret – what an improvement!

Reward: All three of the fire towers just mentioned were vandalized in one form or another. Tom had a suggestion that perhaps we should think about posting a reward for people who turn in such vandals. What do you think? Would it work?

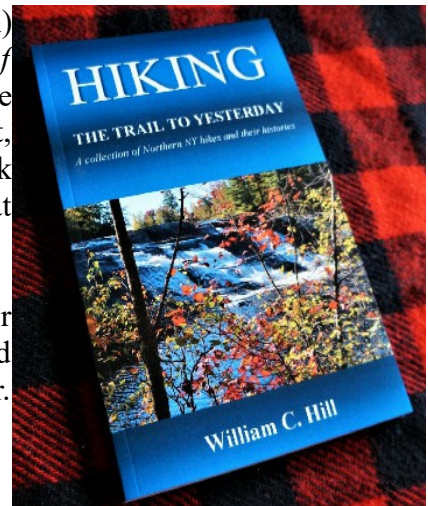
April 2019 Newsletter Follow Up: The discussion about springs had Bill Tindall from Kempshall remembering hauling water - “The spring for Kempshall Mt tower was located a moderate distance down the opposite side of the mountain from the access trail. Given the fact that water runs and percolates down hill, springs are always a hike down from the mountain top. We hauled water in gallon wine jugs. However, the bed rock at the top of the mountain had depressions that collected rain water. This water was used for washing dishes, etc. As a young boy I don't remember washing myself much.”

April Trivia: What is the name of the company located in NYS who developed a portable water container for fighting wildfires? No one answered the question. Too easy? Not fun anymore? Should we be skipping this segment of the newsletter?

Corrections Department: I mistakenly put down 2 rain dates for the Lighting of the Fire Tower Event. The Lighting Event will be held on Saturday, August 31st from 9-9:30 pm. The Rain date is Sunday, September 1, 2019 from 9-9:30 pm.

Book of the Month: *Hiking the Trail to Yesterday* by William (Bill) Hill is an excellent addition to your library. Subtitled *A Collection of Northern NY Hikes and Their Histories*, you will find several fire towers within the pages, some still standing and some long gone; Cat, Stillwater, Tooley Pond, and Cathead to mention a few. Take a walk with Bill to these places, enjoy his descriptions, history and great photographs along the way. Here is short excerpt:

“In 1911, Catamount Mountain joined the growing list of Fire Tower peaks. The first tower was a wooden structure, a log-framed pyramid with planks spaced on the sides for support and to work as a ladder. There was no cab on top of the tower. ”



Guidelines for the 6th Annual Lighting of the Fire Tower Event Statewide: The original premise for the Lighting of the Fire Tower Event came from Doug Hamilton of the Red Hill Fire Tower Committee. The idea was to light the fire tower with a high powered light, put lots of press releases in the local paper about the time when this would occur and invite people to go to locations around the community where they could look up, see the light on the horizon and remember that there was a fire tower there watching over and protecting the community and surrounding forest.

To ensure a safe event and in keeping with the spirit and purpose of the event, please plan on the following:

- a - If there is a specific fire tower that you would like to light, please reach out to the group that maintains that fire tower. If in doubt, let me know and I can point you to the right person. Please let me know so I can maintain an up to date list of the fire towers that will be lit.
- b - Work with the individual fire tower group to reach out to the local press, distribute flyers, etc about the event. Include locations on the ground in the community where people can look up and see the tower lit. Utilize <http://heywhatsthat.com> or other similar web pages to determine locations.
- c - Discuss with the fire tower group the type of light to be used and who will be the Illuminator.
- d - If you choose to organize a hike to the fire tower, please be sure to go as a group with proper gear, head lamps, etc. Hiking in the dark can be difficult and unsafe for the inexperienced hiker.
- e - Please light the lamp for the specified time period; 9-9:30 pm.
- f - Please report back to myself and the fire tower group how the event went and that all are off the mountain safely.

Saturday, August 31, 2019, Fire Tower Lighting Event Date

Sunday, September 1, 2019, Fire Tower Lighting Event Rain Date

Thanks for participating in this statewide event!

Help Wanted

Small, local specialty Construction Company, **Fire Tower Restoration**, is seeking one or two workers with some Construction Work Experience. We will interview and immediately have work at our Bloomingdale shop and soon after begin projects at other locations. Varied work skills which will be used daily:

Laborer, Concrete work, basic Carpentry, Nuts and Bolts work, Painting, Metal work, basic Rope work.

Applicants must be:

Comfortable with basic hand tools and basic power tools. Reliable, punctual and have your own transportation. In possession of a clean Drivers License. Capable of safely carrying, moving or lifting 40 to 100 pounds short distances. Comfortable working at significant heights. Able to learn proper safety techniques and use of safety equipment to work at heights. Willing to learn new skills and understand when to ask for assistance. Able to use common sense around a busy construction work site.

Required to use Safety Equipment including Helmets, Hearing Protection, Safety Glasses

OSHA Fall Protection Harnesses, Gloves and Steel-Toed Footwear.

****Experienced Rock Climbers, Forestry and Urban Tree Workers encouraged to apply.**

Fire Tower Restoration specializes in acquiring, dismantling, restoring and re-erecting historic Forest Fire Observation Towers. We are based in Bloomingdale, NY where the restoration work is performed. We have had past projects in seventeen states to date. This year we have major projects in: New York State: Install an 80 foot Fire Tower, 2 weeks; Near Manchester, NH: Install a 100 foot Fire Tower, 4 weeks; Near Baxter State Park, Western Maine: Install an 80 foot Fire Tower, 4 weeks; On Hurricane Mountain in the Adirondacks: Install a new roof on 40 foot Fire Tower.

Some projects include travel to various locations and may require camping on site for extended periods. When working locally, hours will be as needed, 20 to 40 hours per week. When traveling for out-of-town projects, work can be 40 to 60 hours per week. Our work season this year will wind up in December. We can use you through the Summer months and longer if you are available into December. We also have Winter projects. Candidates should send a Cover Letter and Resume with Education and Work Experience to:

Fire Tower Restoration

393 Fletcher Farm Road

Bloomingdale, NY 12913

firetowerrestoration@gmail.com

Calendar

Sunday, May 26, 2019: 10:00 am Anyone who wishes to accompany Susan Serico, Sterling Fire Tower Volunteer Coordinator, on a guided hike to the tower should meet at the Visitor's Center at 10:00 am. The tower and cab will be open to the public. Susan will be staying at the tower until 3 pm. Hikers will be on their own to either return to the Visitor's Center or continue hiking in the Park. Wear sturdy shoes/hiking boots and bring water and a snack.

Thursday, June 6, 2019: Sterling Fire Tower hike led by Friends of Sterling Forest. Meet at the Visitor Center at 11:00 a.m. and hike from there.

Saturday and Sunday June 8th and 9th, 2019: FFLA NE Conference in Mount Tremper, NY. **Don't forget to register!**

Saturday, June 15, 2019 at 9:00 A.M., the Friends of Mt. Arab trail work day with the Adirondack Mountain Club will take place. This will be similar to last year – cleaning water bars and perhaps doing one of the short trail re-routes if time allows. Anyone interested should sign up at the ADK website: <https://www.adk.org/workshops-and-special-events/>

Saturday, July 13, 2019 Friends of Poke O Moonshine will be doing trail work on the Ranger's trail. Call David Thomas-Train at 802-989-6134 to sign up.

Tuesday, July 16, 2019 The Town of Horicon Historical Society in Brant Lake will be holding a Meet the Forest Rangers event.

Friday, August 2, 2019 – Sunday, August 2-4, 2019 will be the Centennial Celebration for Balsam Lake Mountain. Events will be held at Morgan Outdoors in Livingston Manor on August 2nd, at the summit on August 3rd, and at the Dry Brook Community Hall on August 4th.

Wednesday August 7: Trail work day on the Observer's Trail at Poke O Moonshine. Call David Thomas-Train 802-989-6134 to sign up.

Thursday, August 8, 2019 will be a reception and program to celebrate Hurricane Fire tower's centennial at the Elizabethtown museum.

Saturday and Sunday, August 10th and 11th, 2019 Friends of Hurricane Mountain will host hikes to the fire tower and Observers cabin as part of their celebration.

Tuesday, August 13, 2019 the The Town of Horicon Historical Society in Brant Lake will be holding an Adirondack History talk by Historian, Mark Friden.

Saturday, August 24, 2019, The Friends of Stillwater Fire Tower will be holding their centennial celebration.

Saturday, August 31, 2019, Fire Tower Lighting Event Date

Sunday, September 1, 2019, Fire Tower Lighting Event Rain Date

Are you an FFLA Member? Would you please consider joining? Simply go to <http://ffla.org/index.html> and while you are there take a look around the web page. It has lots to offer!

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www.ffla.org