

Pennsylvania Chapter of the FFLA Report 2017

This year the Commonwealth has moved full speed ahead with the removal and replacement of many of the fire towers here. The new Big Pocono Tower is nearly completed, thanks to the photo Keith Argow emailed to the group which was taken by Brandon Smith a few weeks ago. As noted, we at present cannot provide specific specs about the new structure. Bear Springs Tower in Luzerne County has been under active removal. As of Nov. 2017, the tower was approximately half-way dismantled. Information on other towers have not yet been received.

I would like to note that several towers, or portions of them have been “rescued” and will be used for educational exhibits. Several years ago, the top portion of the former Mount Pleasant Tower was rehabbed and is now located at Owl Creek Reservoir Commission property near Tamaqua, PA. The top cab of the former Keffer Tower is at the District 18 (Weiser) Office near Aristes, PA awaiting refurbishing for educational purposes. Also, District 11 (Pinchot) will be relocating the top section of a former fire tower (I’m guessing it will be Bear Springs) to Moon Lake Park, which is located in Luzerne County as an exhibit. I will be meeting with the District Forester in February regarding the FFLA extending a helping hand with this project. It should also be noted that the former Big Pocono Tower (22- foot Aeromotor) built circa 1921 has found a new home at Grey Towers near Milford, PA. I will be visiting there on January 25 (inclement weather date is January 26) to discuss work needed to be done to restore the tower with the Directors of Grey Towers (U.S. Forestry Service) and will be bringing one of our FFLA signs to be placed on the reconstructed tower. At a future date we will also be presenting Grey Towers with a certificate recognizing Big Pocono at its new location. I should also note that an individual has inquired concerning saving the Stony Mountain Tower, located in Dauphin County. This tower is on PA State Game Lands, and hence, it would need to be removed to a private location. I have asked Brandon to inquire of the organization he believes would be interested in restoring this tower if they would be interested in this project.

On November 11, 2017 I represented our organization at the Annual Meeting of the Pennsylvania Forest Heritage Association held near Chambersburg, PA. I was also offered and accepted a term on the Association’s Board of Trustees. I should also note that the former Cornwall Fire Tower (Blaw Knox style tower) is “reposing” near the Association’s Discovery Center, which is on the grounds of Caledonia State Park. It has been there quite the number of years and it is hoped to one day restore it. However, age and weather have taken their toll on it. I will find out more when I am able to visit and inspect the tower when the weather becomes more favorable.

Our Facebook Group is quite active and we have posted many new and vintage tower/forestry photographs and carry on lively discussions on all things PA towers/forestry. We currently have 94 members, approximately ten are new since January, 2017.

Respectfully Submitted on January 7, 2018.

Dan Bubnis

PA FFLA Chapter Director