

HISTORIAN'S CORNER

Winter 2009
By: Bob Spear

"Saving the past for the future"

Hawley, MA and Big Bear Lake, CA, 1998

HAWLEY, MASSACHUSETTS

The eastern conference was held August 21st thru the 24th. This would be the 23rd meeting of our Association since 1990. It was sad to report that Oregon Director Ron Johnson had passed away August 1st.

A Pennsylvania Museum report was given by Steve Cummings; tower restoration reports and a newsletter report were submitted by Gary Weber, who could not attend. With DEM arrivals on Saturday, the Chief Fire Warden gave a presentation and Larry Paul put on a slide show on Long Island fire towers in NY. Keith Goodrich nominated Ray Grimes to be acting Secretary. Steve reported on Al and Sylvia Grimes' trip to Washington DC with their displays. They received the "Golden Smokey", the US Forest Service's highest award for fire prevention. A motion to change the name of the Pennsylvania Chapter to "Keystone" was addressed.

BIG BEAR, CALIFORNIA

The 24th meeting of the FFLA took place at the Northwoods Resort at Big Bear Lake October 8th - 11th, hosted by the San Bernardino National Forest Association and the Angeles and San Bernardino National Forests. Angeles National Forest Archaeologist Mike McIntyre welcomed the group and then served as moderator. Thursday's presentations included "Management of Lookouts" by USFS Historian Linda Lux, "California Department of Forestry Lookouts" by Historian Mark Thornton, "A Success Story - Bear Basin Butte Lookout" by Carol McCall of the Six Rivers NF, "Archaeological Perspective of Lookouts on the San Bernardino" by consulting archaeologist Karen Swope, and "An Overview of Lookouts on the Angeles" by McIntyre.

The afternoon session produced a "Visioning session" facilitated by Kay Dalton of Triad Foundation. Images of "where will lookouts be in ten years" were drawn together, with ideas presented of who are the allies, what are the barriers, how to set and achieve goals, and how to prioritize.

On Friday, local fire personnel gave testament to the value of the lookouts. A keynote address by Angeles Forest Supervisor Mike Rogers was followed by presentations on the Lookout Host Program, the San Bernardino NF Association, partnership and fundraising strategies, and an update on Central Idaho lookout activities. Management practices were discussed in presentations on the NHLR, preservation and restoration, and the rental program. The Friday evening Board Meeting saw discussion of director status, conference sites, and 501c3 status.

Saturday's activities began with a eulogy and moment of silence for Ron Johnson. San Bernardino Forest Supervisor Gene Zimmerman and Regional Forester Lynn Sprague gave keynote addresses, followed by Chairman Argow. Alberta lookout Bob Jason related some of his experiences; in 15 seasons, he has had 0 visitors at his remote lookout (23 miles from the nearest road - no trail)!

Saturday evening's barbecue at the Discovery Center was followed by a silent auction that netted \$572.50 to be used as seed money for the 1999 Western Conference.

The Sunday tour group of 20 was greeted by volunteer hosts at Butler Peak, Keller Peak and Strawberry Peak Lookouts. The "hard-core" portion of the group also visited Morton Peak Lookout, a potential restoration project.

The January 1999 Board Meeting would again be held at Kittatinney Valley State Park near Andover, New Jersey.

Bob Spear, Historian FFLA