



CALLBOARD



ANTIQUE FIRE ASSOCIATION of NEW JERSEY

APRIL 2011

– NORTH JERSEY CHAPTER of SPAAMFAA –

VOL. 30, ISSUE 4

AFANJ CHAPTER MEETING
NEXT MEETING THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 2011 – 7:30 PM
FRANKLIN FIRE DEPARTMENT
@137 Buckwheat Road, Franklin, NJ 07416



(Above) Franklin Fire Department's two restored antiques, the 1926 (left) and 1915 LaFrance pumpers, pose side by side. Photo courtesy of the Franklin Fire Department.

START YOUR ENGINES FOR FRANKLIN

The heavy snows of late December/January have melted, and the resulting floods have receded in northern New Jersey. With the sun warming our state, AFANJ members should have brought their antique rigs out of winter hibernation by now, so as they say at the start of each NASCAR race, "Gentlemen, and

Ladies, Start Your Engines," or should I have written "enjines?"

Whichever, there should be a lot of antiques headed to AFANJ's 3rd annual muster at the Franklin Fire Department, located in Sussex County, just off Route 23.

According to Franklin historian George La Bance, the Franklin Furnace Fire Department was organized in the old store room of the New Jersey Zinc Company on March 9, 1911. The fledgling department consisted of Hose Companies 1, 2, and 3 and a Hook & Ladder Company. NJ Zinc-supplied equipment consisted of three hand-drawn hose carts and one ladder truck. The companies, with a combined total of 72 active members, were located in four sections of the community.

Franklin, recognized as the “Fluorescent Mineral Capital of the World,” was part of agricultural Hardyston Township until the area’s mineral workers decided they had little in common with their farming neighbors and held a referendum to separate on April 23, 1913. They determined that a portion of the original township should become the Borough of Franklin. The new borough was incorporated on March 18, 1913.

On that same day, the Franklin Furnace Fire Department became the Franklin Fire Department under the control of the Mayor and Borough Council.

The New Jersey Zinc Company ordered an American LaFrance Type 40 triple-combination junior pumper in 1915. The details behind the order for SN 1020 are a bit confusing. According to LaFrance’s corporate records, the rig was ordered for the Chicago, Illinois, office. It is not clear whether this was LaFrance’s office or NJ Zinc’s. The rig was transferred to an unidentified New York office and sold to Franklin Fire Department on September 15, 1916, just 14 days after being shipped to the east coast. The engine finally arrived in Franklin on October 11, 1916.

The 350-gpm LaFrance pumper gained fame as Sussex County’s first motorized piece of fire apparatus. With a top speed of 35 mph and riding on hard rubber tires, it must have been a challenge to handle on rural roads.

The engine was returned to LaFrance’s plant in Elmira, NY, for what today would be known as a “retrofit.” It was repainted and received pneumatic tires. The failure to replace the wooden artillery wheels almost proved fatal

when one of the wooden spokes collapsed in 1927 while entering Route 23, rolling the engine on its side. The rig survived and was further modernized when it was fitted with a windshield. The engine continued to serve Franklin until being replaced by a Series 700 LaFrance and retired in 1954. It was subsequently sold to Joe Kulsar’s Garage.

Franklin returned to LaFrance in 1926 and purchased a Type 38 triple-combination pumper (SN 5717). This engine’s 600-gpm pump had almost twice the capacity of that of its older sister. Also fitted later in its career with a windshield and modern warning devices, this engine remained on the roster until 1957.

Franklin augmented its pumpers with a hose wagon mounted on a 1925 Stewart chassis.

The department continued its LaFrance tradition by ordering an art deco Type 560 open cab pumper, complete with an overhead ladder rack, in 1938. SN 1015 reportedly had a 500-gpm pump and 500 gallon water tank. Shipped to Franklin on August 9, 1938, it remained in service until the late 1960s and was sold to a private collector. It recently reappeared when its owner passed away and it was placed up for sale by his widow.

Franklin’s next LaFrances were a 1952 Type 775 and a 1957 Type 810. SN 4659 and 5535 were equipped with 750/1000 and 1000/1000 pumps/tanks respectively. A friend reports the 1952 “bath tub” is now in Texas. The 1957 was shipped to South America for further service.

As Hahns were popular departmental choices during the 1960s, Franklin joined the trend and bought a pumper from the Hamburg, PA, firm in 1968. The 750-gpm rig carried 1,000 gallons of water and was the department’s first closed cab rig. Upon retirement, this engine went north to Canada.

The final Franklin LaFrance was a yellow-painted Pacemaker delivered in 1974. Pacemakers were designed for the mid-price market and featured Cincinnati cabs.



(Top) Franklin's 1915 Type 40 American LaFrance pumper. (Bottom) The 1926 American LaFrance Type 38. Both photos courtesy of the Franklin Fire Department.

Franklin's had a 1,500-gpm pump, carried 500 gallons of water, and was their first diesel powered piece of apparatus. Later repainted red, it was sold to Beach Lake, PA, following retirement in the mid-1990s.

Franklin returned to Hahn in 1981. The rig was another closed-cab diesel equipped engine with a 1250-gpm pump and 750-gallon booster tank. Following retirement in 2008, it was sold to a private collector in Circleville, NY.

Franklin's current apparatus includes two KME top-mount 1750/1000 pumpers delivered in 1994 and 2001. The pair is augmented by a black-over-red 2008 Sutphen 1750/1000 top-mount pumper and a 1996 Ford F-450 utility truck.

Normally, a department's history would end here. For Franklin, the next chapter came when Joe Kulsar returned the two vintage LaFrances to the fire company in 1975. As the Type 40 was in really bad shape, a restoration committee was formed headed by Ed Carroll and Carl Morse to obtain donations for the rig's restoration from local businesses. Fund raisers were also held and an addition was added to the fire house to permit work on the old engine. A pristine restoration re-emerged fifteen years later and has proven to be a trophy winner and spectator favorite at various parades and musters.

The 1926 underwent a similar restoration in 1996. As it was in far better condition than the 1915, its restoration took only two years to complete.

Joe Kulsar also donated an 1892 hand-drawn hose cart to the Franklin Fire Museum. The cart once served the New Jersey Zinc Company.

To return to where we began, "Gentlemen, and Ladies, Start Your Engines" and plan to head to Franklin Fire Department on April 30 for AFANJ's 3rd Annual Spring Muster. There will be plenty of antiques to see, along with

Franklin Fire Department's Museum and its memorabilia. There will be food available at the muster, so bring an appetite along with your camera and help Franklin Fire Department celebrate its 100th anniversary.

Thanks to ex-Franklin Chief and museum chairman James Nidelko for his assistance.

CORRECTION

Geoff Swenson noted that the photo caption stating the 1935 Seagrave was responding from the Public Works Garage is incorrect. It was the Morristown Water Department's garage.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Thanks to the Don Simmons for arranging our March St. Patrick's day meeting at the Grass Hopper II. It was well attended and I think everybody enjoyed themselves.

Thanks to Mike Foote, Pete Eisele, Bob Kane and Jim Pfeiffer for helping at Rifle Camp Expo last week.

Our Spring muster is coming up quickly at Franklin (Sussex) on 4/30. I hope to see some members who live that to come over and see us.

We have been asked to judge two events this year. On May 22 Liberty Hall Museum is have a dedication of restored 1911 American LaFrance Metropolitan steamer. The steamer belonged to charter member Stuart Kean and has been meticulously restored by Hal Fillinger. This piece of American fire service history is unbelievable.

On Sunday June 5th, we will be judging at the Newark Fire Dept. Historical Association. Please let me know if you can help at any of these events.

SAM ROBINSON – President



(Left) The 1892 Wirt & Knox Hose Cart. (Center) Franklin's 1925 Stewart Hose Wagon – courtesy of the Franklin Fire Department. (Bottom) The 1926 LaFrance prior to its restoration in 1996.





(Above) Franklin Fire Department's LaFrances pose outside of quarters in the late 1950s. (Left) to right) The 1957, 1952, 1938, 1926, and 1913. Note windshields have been added to the two vintage Alfies. Photo courtesy of Franklin Fire Department.



FIRE SALE

HAVE AN ITEM FOR SALE or TRADE? DO YOU NEED TO FIND THAT SPECIAL ITEM? *FIRE SALE* IS A NEW CALLBOARD FEATURE THAT WILL PROVIDE AFANJ MEMBERS WITH A PLACE TO ADVERTISE ITEMS FOR SALE or TRADE and FOR THOSE FIREMATIC ITEMS NEEDED FOR YOUR COLLECTION or APPARATUS RESTORATION PROJECT. SUBMIT ITEMS FOR INCLUSION IN *FIRE SALE* TO AFANJ PRESIDENT SAM ROBINSON at srobinson@afanj.org or PETER EISELE at HighSeasEd@aol.com

WANTED: Wooden Ladder for a 1963 Seagrave 531-KB Pumper. Contact Cyrus Matthews, Hackettstown, NJ.

FOR SALE: Pressed steel Buddy L' Water Towers (circa 1930). One restored by its owner and is \$1,500 plus shipping. The other original/good condition for \$3,500 plus shipping. Contact Peter Eisele at 973-635-4661 or HighSeasEd@aol.com

NEWSLETTER

Peter T. Eisele – Editor
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(973) 635-4661 - highseased@aol.com

Please send any information about local apparatus, fire department activities, news clippings, or anything else that you might think may be of interest to members.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Membership to the Antique Fire Association of New Jersey is open to all individuals. Fire Departments and organizations interested in the preservation restoration, and appreciation of vintage fire apparatus and memorabilia and preserving the history of the American fire fighting profession. You need not own apparatus to be a member.

THE AFANJ IS THE NORTHERN NEW JERSEY CHAPTER of S.P.A.A.M.F.A.A.

Society for the Preservation and Appreciation
of Motor Fire Apparatus in America.
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2011 AFANJ OFFICERS

President: Sam Robinson - 908-623-0284
Vice-President: Jim Pfeiffer – 973-219-7484
Secretary: Sandy Burdge - 732-741-5562
Treasurer: Irv Loveless - 973-226-7390

TRUSTEES

Robert Kane – 2011
Ed Burdge - 2012
Peter Eisele – 2013

THE ABOVE OFFICERS & TRUSTEES MAKE UP AFANJ's 2011 BOARD of DIRECTORS

AFANJ MEETING LOCATIONS

3rd Wednesday of the Odd Months
3rd Thursday of the Even Months
@ 7:30 PM

AFANJ Meeting Locations are Needed.
Please call Sam Robinson, Pres., at (908) 623-0284 if you have a meeting site.

2011 MEETINGS CALENDAR

April 21 – Franklin Fire Department
May 18 - TBA

2011 FIREMATIC EVENTS CALENDAR

Apr. 16-17 – Allentown – Auction/Flea
Apr. 30 – Franklin, NJ – AFANJ Muster
Apr. 30 – Photo Night – East Rutherford
May 20-22 – Harrisburg – Fire EXPO
May 22 – Union, Liberty Hall Steamer dedication
June 4 – Milltown, NJ – Parade
June 5 – Newark Historical Muster
June 11 – Lyndhurst, NJ – Parade
June 18 – Milford, NJ - Parade
Sept. 10 – IFBA Conv. – Photo Shoot
Oct. 2 – Franklin, NJ – County Parade
Oct. 9 - Sussex County - - Muster

Check individual websites for additional details and directions.



(Above) 1974 LaFrance Pacemaker following repainting. (Below) The 1981 Hahn was Franklin's last of this make.

**ANTIQUE FIRE ASSOCIATION
of NEW JERSEY
39 BRICH AVENUE
LITTLE SILVER, NJ 07739**