



# CALLBOARD



## ANTIQUe FIRE ASSOCIATION of NEW JERSEY

MAY 2011

- NORTH JERSEY CHAPTER of SPAAMFAA

- VOL. 30, ISSUE 5

**AFANJ CHAPTER MEETING**  
**NEXT MEETING WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, 2011 – 7:30 PM**  
**BELL & SIREN CLUB**  
**@East Orange Fire Headquarters, Main Street, East Orange, NJ**



(Above) Hardyston Township Volunteer Fire Department had to be encouraged to bring their 1959 GMC/Great Eastern to the AFANJ Muster in Franklin. Participants selected the engine as their favorite.

## DRESSING for a MUSTER

AFANJ's members are not normally TJ Max *fashionistas*, so why was what to wear the main topic of early discussions at the Association's April 30<sup>th</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Spring Muster sponsored jointly with Franklin Fire Department and held at Franklin Firemen's Memorial Field? The answer boiled down to a familiar subject, the weather.

Most of AFANJ's members awoke to a sunny but chilly Saturday. Almost all wrestled with the dilemma of whether to bring a jacket to the muster, let alone wear it. As the morning progressed, those who brought and wore coats were glad they did. Persistent clouds and a slight breeze made northwest New Jersey downright chilly. Almost everyone spent the

first couple of hours discussing their early morning clothing decisions rather than the antique apparatus that was arriving at a steady pace.

By the time the sun finally broke through around noon, there were eighteen pieces of apparatus on display. As things warmed up, and burgers and hot dogs prepared by ex-Chief James Raperto, Sr. and Engineer Chuck Hughes filled empty stomachs, conversations switched, as they should, to the apparatus on display.

The majority of the antique fire engines and hand drawn pieces on display were familiars that had been seen at previous musters, but six were newcomers, including a rig made by a relatively unknown manufacturer.

The aforementioned firm was Buffalo, NY-based Cayasler Manufacturing Company, an outfit that built a full line of fire apparatus on commercial chassis between 1936 and 1944. The firm actually traced its roots to Case Manufacturing formed by Allan Case in 1932. Case built a few depression era rigs at a small shop. In 1933 the Geisler brothers joined the company, and the name was changed to an amalgam of the two family names to become Caseler Manufacturing. When Lester W. Young, a former Buffalo Fire Appliance Corporation executive joined the firm in 1936, Mr. Young's initial was added to the corporate name making it Cayasler Manufacturing. Young eventually acquired a majority stake in the company and changed the firm's name to Young Fire Equipment. Young continued to manufacture fire apparatus until it wrapped up its business in 1991. (A complete history can be found in Walt McCall's *Illustrated Encyclopedia of American Fire Apparatus Manufacturers*.)

There probably were few attending the Franklin muster who realized that the 1938 Ford pumper brought by AFANJ's vice-president Jim Pfeiffer was something special. The Cayasler-manufactured rig served in the Buffalo-area (possibly at North Branch, NY) before being sold to an Indian tribe. Believed to be equipped with a 500-gpm pump, the

rig's body carried three sections of hard suction, a searchlight behind its closed cab, and displayed a sleek body design.

A second rarity was Dave Johnson's white-over-red 1970 Crown pumper. Featuring a 1250-gpm pump and 400 gallon tank, the rig was purchased from Santa Cruz County, California. Johnson and his son drove the Crown from there to their home in Sparta, NJ. As the large diesel-powered rig lacked the creature comforts found on today's rigs, and carried no water on the trip, Johnson stated that he cheered when he finally saw a sign stating, "Welcome to Sparta." The journey took a reported five days with the rig's Detroit diesel burning over \$1,000 in fuel.

Although Crowns were produced in large numbers between 1951 and 1985, they were primarily West Coast rigs. The one exception was Montvale, NJ. That department operated three Crowns at one time. Most individuals living on the East Coast knew that Crowns existed due to their use in early episodes of the television drama *Emergency*. Crowns were even featured in the final seasons when Engine 51's Ward called for mutual aid.

Franklin's neighbor, Hardyston, had to be coaxed to bring their 1959 GMC/Great Eastern to the muster. The 750-gpm pumper, designated Truck 4, was one of two operated by that department. The other was a 1955 acquired second-hand from Stillwater Fire Department. It only served briefly.

Hardyston plans to restore this distinctive all-red rig and may have been further encouraged by the fact that the muster's participants picked it as their favorite.

An all-white hand-drawn hose reel called the "Silver Ghost" also drew a lot of well-deserved attention. The builder of the appliance was not known however, it was saved by an Irvington, NJ, resident and until recently was in a private museum on Cape Cod. Helen Burns stated it was built in 1854 and eventually wound up in the possession of the New Jersey Fire Museum.



**PREVIOUS PAGE PHOTOS. (Top) New Jersey Fire Museum's hose cart. (Center) Jim Pfeiffer's Ford/Cayasler. (Bottom) K Model Seagrave pumper.**

A fifth newcomer to the muster circuit was Cyrus Matthew's 1963 Seagrave K Model featuring a 750 gpm pump and a 500 gallon tank. This rig served Wytheville, Virginia, until retired.

Seagrave was slow to introduce a cab-forward design to its product line. In 1959 they reluctantly introduced the K series of pumpers and aerials. As can be seen in the photo of the rig at the muster, the K Seagrave featured a narrow, tall, squared cab that was available in either an open or closed cab version. A wider cab design was introduced in 1968, bringing construction of the K series to a close.

A newcomer to an AFANJ muster was from another of Franklin's neighbors, Wantage Township Company #2's (Colesville Fire Department). This open cab engine was a 1929 Peter Pirsch with a 600-gpm rotary pump that originally served in New Market, NJ. This department also brought their in-house built 1985 Chevrolet brush truck.

Other rigs in attendance included Franklin's 1915 LaFrance pumper, their 1892 Wirt & Knox hose cart, and their Museum's undated chemical cart and hose wagon. Sam Robinson brought Pottersville's 1961 Dodge Power Wagon and his ex-Bernardsville 1984 Hahn. Newark Fire Department's Historical Society's 1958 Mack B Model Mack was a crowd pleaser as were two rigs that arrived around mid-morning from Circleville, NY. They were Luke Payntar, Jr's 1973 LaFrance Pioneer from Dolgesville, NY, and a 1963 Maxim 100-foot mid-mount aerial that served Ossining, NY. The latter is jointly owned by Luke and Bruce Zareski. Sussex County Fire Academy brought their Chevy/Pierce, ex-Branchville. A final rig was a 1906 Wirt & Knox hose cart owned by Helen and Bob Burns.

The day ended with the presentation of three awards. The first, as noted, the Participants Favorite's Award was given to Hardyston Township Volunteer Fire Departments 1959 GMC/Great Eastern. President Sam Robinson also presented the Franklin Fire Department's Donald Stoll with a plaque thanking the fire company for their joint sponsorship of the muster. The final presentation went to former Franklin Fire Chief and Museum Chairman James Nidelko for his personal efforts in organizing the successful event.

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

A special thanks to Jim Nidelko and the Franklin Fire Department for hosting our April meeting as well as our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Spring Muster. With Jim's help, this was our most successful Spring muster to date. I want to also thank AFANJ members Ed and Sandy Burge, Pete Eisele, Mike Foote, Bob Kane, Rich Loveless, Jim Pfeiffer, Dirk Sheasley, Cyrus Mathews and Irv Loveless for their help.

Our next adventure will be on May 22 at the Liberty Hall Museum Fire House. Build in memory of Charter Member Stuart Kean, the museum will be dedicating a 1911 American LaFrance steamer purchased by Stuart many years ago. The steamer has been completely restored and is an unbelievable work of art. We have been asked to judge the apparatus so please let me know if you can help.

We will also be judging at Newark on June 5<sup>th</sup> so again let me know if you can help.

**SAM ROBINSON – President**

## NEWSLETTER

Peter T. Eisele – Editor  
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**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 in 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 firefighting profession. You need not own apparatus to be a member.

### **THE AFANJ IS THE NORTHERN NEW JERSEY CHAPTER OF SP.A.A.M.F.A.A.**

Society for the Preservation and Appreciation of Motor Fire Apparatus in America.  
P.O. Box 2005, Syracuse, NY 13220-2005  
[www.spaamfaa.org](http://www.spaamfaa.org)

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**39 BIRCH AVENUE**  
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Visit: [www.afanj.org](http://www.afanj.org)

### 2011 AFANJ OFFICERS

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

**3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the Odd Months**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the Even Months**

### AFANJ MEETING LOCATIONS

May 18 – Bell & Siren Club, East Orange, NJ  
June 16 – Location to be announced  
July/August – No Meetings Scheduled  
September 21 – Location to be announced  
October 20 – Location to be announced

### 2011 FIREMATIC EVENTS CALENDAR

May 20-22 – Harrisburg, PA – Fire Expo  
May 21 – Ahrens-Fox Muster – Lutherville  
May 22 – Liberty Hall Steamer Dedication – Union, NJ  
June 4 – Catskill Fire Cats Muster – Circleville  
**June 5 – Newark FD Historical Muster**  
June 11 – Lyndhurst, NJ – Parade  
June 11 – Brooklawn, NJ - Parade  
June 18 – Milford, NJ – Parade  
June 26 – Jamesburg, NJ- Muster  
July 9 - Harrisburg, PA - Muster  
Sept. 10 – IFA Convention – Photo Shoot  
Sept 24 - Boonton, NJ – AFANJ Muster  
Oct. 1 – Franklin, NJ – Parade  
Oct. 9 – Sussex County Fire Academy – Muster

Check individual websites for additional details and directions.

### **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 sale or trade to AFANJ President Sam Robinson at [srobinson@afanj.com](mailto:srobinson@afanj.com) or Peter Eisele at [HighSeasEd@aol.com](mailto:HighSeasEd@aol.com)**



*(Top) Colesville's 1929 open-cab Peter Pirsch Pumper. (Bottom) Dave Johnson's 1970 Crown Firecoach that traveled from California to New Jersey in five days.*

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