

THE OLDE FIRE BELL



SPRING 2011

GULFCOASTSPAAMFAA.ORG

SINCE 1975

AHRENS FOX DAY AT THE MARYLAND FIRE MUSEUM



As a connoisseur of fine fire training, I have enjoyed a number of visits to the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. On my most recent trip, I had the opportunity to stop by and pay a visit to what is likely one of the finest fire museums in the country. Nestled in the Northern Baltimore suburb of Lutherville, the Maryland Fire Museum, which has been in operation for 40 years, is home to many beautifully restored fire apparatus as well as many other artifacts related to the fire service. The Fire Museum of Maryland opened in 1971 and displays apparatus from 1806 to 1957. Over fifty rigs are on display, and are complemented by a broad range of special exhibits. These include a working fire alarm telegraph system, badge and uniform displays, and Baltimore's High Pressure Pumping System.

The museum hosts a number of events throughout the year, and I happened to stumble into "Ahrens Fox Day" held on May 21st. Owners of these fine pieces of American fire service history, once known as the "Rolls Royce" of fire engines, convened on the MFM parking lot for what was discussed as likely the finest and largest collection of these trucks since the reunion that was held in Cincinnati in 1982. There were 17 Ahrens Fox pumpers, most all fully restored and running. Also present was a remarkable mock-up of a mini Ahrens Fox pumper as a go-cart.

As I arrived a pumping demonstration was just concluding. They also had a parade prior to my arrival, which if my flight hadn't been delayed I would (continued on page 8)

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CALENDAR

- Future meeting dates: Monday at 7 PM on July 18, August 15, and September 19 at the Community National Bank on Bellaire Blvd.
- SPAAMFAA Summer National Convention and Muster, Syracuse, NY, August 3 - 6, 2011
- Deer Park Fire Prevention Parade, October 8, 2011
- East Texas Historical Fire Society, Tyler TX, October 21- 22, 2011
- Houston Fire Museum Fire Fest, October 29, 2011



UPFRONT

Welcome to the Spring 2011 Edition of the *The Olde Fire Bell*. The weather has been unbearably hot in the Houston area this Spring time, making it difficult to attend musters. Hats off to all those who ventured out despite the heat and humidity. Gotta love those open-air conditioned cabs!

The Olde Fire Bell welcomes its newest members. Kim and Cindy Stellhorn of Santa Fe, and Luke Garrett of Joaquin. We thank you for your interest in The Texas Gulf Coast Chapter of SPAAM-FAA, and wish you luck with your acquisitions and restorations.

This Spring Newsletter covers several

important events, including Humble Good Oil Days, July 4th Parades, The LODD Benefit in Hitchcock, and a special cover article by Mark Turvey about attending the Ahrens Fox Reunion at the Maryland Fire Museum.

A reminder that the **August 15th meeting will be at the Humble Inn Restaurant in downtown Humble.** The meeting will be at 7 PM as usual. If you are coming from Houston, take 59 North and exit Humble/1960. Turn right at the first red light on the service road, at First Street. Go through 3 red lights, then a 1/4 mile past the third light you will see the Humble Inn on the right hand side.

Any questions, please call Clinton at 281-802-8702. The food is pretty good there!

The Braniff Street shop property is for sale once again. Let's all hope for a positive outcome.

Mark your calendars for the Houston Fire Museum Benefit on Sunday, August 14th. See page 3 for more information.

The Olde Fire Bell thanks members for submitting material for the Spring 2011 Edition. This Newsletter is made possible by your contributions. A special thanks to Mark Turvey who provided a wealth of information. Keep us in mind next time your at an event!

CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

BY STEVE DALPE

The following is a summary of the Spring 2011 monthly meetings:

April: Nine members recapped the events of the very successful MHIVFD Pumpnic. Forward looking, the group discussed a busy summer, including IFBA, July 4th parades, and Syracuse National in August. Jim McGee suggested routine work days at the warehouse. He proposed a May 14th at 3 PM for starters.

May: Ten members met in the Community National Bank Bellaire Meeting Room. Bill & Kathy Wilcox reported on the IFBA Region 5 meeting in New Or-

leans held on May 6-8. A flyer for June 25th Texas Fallen Heroes Memorial Ride and Cookoff was passed out. There was discussion about ordering t-shirts, polo shirts, or reflective vests; Tom McDonald and Bear Handwerk were asked to look into it. Jim McGee said the club needed more events to attract new, younger members. Tom urged everyone who had not been to the Houston Fire Museum lately to check out the new exhibits. Tom reported that the status of this year's October "Fire Fest" was in question due to city budgetary issues at the HFD Academy. He said a possible substitute site this

year could be around the Houston Fire Museum if that became necessary.

June: Mark Turvey presented a slide show about the Maryland Fire Museum, the Ahrens Fox gathering in Maryland, the Pierce Factory in Appleton WI, The National Firefighters Academy, and the Gettysburg Fire Department. Chuck Buschardt introduced new members Kim & Cindy Stellhorn of Santa Fe. The purchase of seven TGCC metal signs was endorsed. Participation in the LODD Cookoff and 4th July Parades at Friendswood and Nassau Bay was discussed.

The Olde Fire Bell

The Olde Fire Bell is the official quarterly publication of SPAAMFAA Texas Gulf Coast Chapter, issued in March, June, September, and December.

The mission of the newsletter is to highlight SPAAMFAA National initiatives, to spotlight events of the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter, to foster a spirit of friendliness and of cooperation among its members, and to increase public involvement in the preservation, restoration, and operation of equipment in fire service

Acknowledgements

The Olde Fire Bell is continuously seeking input from members and guests for future editions. The editor wishes to recognize the following contributors for making this issue possible:

Clinton Johnson Chuck Buschardt

Mark Turvey Kim Stellhorn Karen Witt

Please send information to the webmaster at GULFCOASTSPAAMFAA.ORG, or send to editor at the address on the newsletter back page

AROUND THE CHAPTER

INFO SHARING

The Olde Fire Bell thanks member Mark Turvey for sharing numerous photographs at the June 20th meeting from his recent fire-related adventures. First on his list was the Maryland Fire Museum in Lutherville MD.



Mark happened to be there during the May 21st Ahrens-Fox Day - the largest assemblage of Ahrens Fox equipment since a 1982 event in Cincinnati. We'll be adding Mark's pictures to the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter website in the future. Next onto the Pierce Factory in Appleton WI. Mark traveled there as part of an acceptance process for a new vehicle his employer was purchasing. Two additional stops included the National Firefighters Memorial at the National Fire Academy, and the Gettysburg Fire Department. Constructed in 1981 on the campus of the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland, the Memorial was officially designated by Congress as the national Memorial to career and volunteer fallen firefighters in 1990. The Gettysburg Fire Department, located in Adams County Pennsylvania, celebrated its 200th anniversary in 2008.

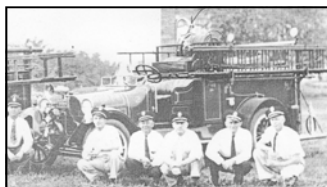
A SPECIAL THANKS



The Olde Fire Bell recognizes member Bill Lofton for volunteering one week of his vacation to assist with the restoration of fellow member, Steve Dalpe's 1941 American LaFrance in Dallas. "I volunteered my time so that Steve could be that much closer

to having his vehicle in events." Despite the intense heat, Bill was instrumental preparing the transmission assembly, mounting the engine, and installing the cab and hose bed.

DISCOVERY



Researching the history of one's fire apparatus or antique equipment can be difficult, even time consuming. However, once obtained, it can add tremendous sentimental value to its ownership. Such was the case of Kim Stellhorn: "I found out today what fire truck my floodlight and scuttle hole ladder came from. It came from the City of Sparta's 1927 Dodge, called No. #2 (see photo above). It was their first truck to carry water in a 200 gallon tank. The truck was sold to Willisville in 1946." Congrats, Kim, on the nostalgic finding.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



New members Kim and Cindy Stellhorn joined the club at the June 20th monthly meeting. They have been married for 30 years and have 2 sons. Cindy got involved in the fire service years ago as a dispatcher and also served

as secretary/treasurer for many years. Kim joined the Santa Fe volunteer fire service in 1971 and had been in Houston Volunteer Fire Department for about 17 years, and is presently assisting and running with a department in Limestone County (Shiloh) Volunteer Fire Department. He was a charter member of America 76 Hose Company with Chuck Buschardt. Over the years, he has collected patches, helmets (from Russia, Austria, France, Germany), mugs, magazines, etc. And he has his own insurance if anyone is seeking antique apparatus coverage. Kim and Cindy are working hard to save their pennies so that they can one day own a fire truck of their own. *The Olde Fire Bell* welcomes the Stellhorns and thanks them for joining the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter of SPAAMFAA.

SPAAMFAA SUMMER NATIONAL

It's not too late to make your reservations for the Summer National SPAAMFAA Convention and Muster, Syracuse NY, August 3rd through 6th, sponsored by the Central New York Chapter. They have a great variety of events planned for all interests. The registration package can be obtained on the CNY Chapter website <http://cnyspaamfaa.com/>.



HFM BENEFIT



The Houston Fire Museum will hold its annual fundraiser on Sunday, August 14th. This year it features an informal "Casino Night" party at the St. Arnold's Brewery at 2000 Lyons Ave. just north of downtown. The hours of the event are 4 - 7 PM. The tickets are only \$25 each and include beer, appetizers, and \$2500 in casino play money. Parking is ample and free. More information can be found on the Houston Fire Museum website.

HUMBLE GOOD OIL DAYS

BY CLINTON JOHNSON

On Saturday, April 2, Clinton Johnson and Bill Lofton displayed their trucks at the 31st Annual Humble Good Oil Days Celebration, held in the heart of downtown Main Street. Good Oil Days celebrates Humble's rich oil history, the 1900's oil strike on Moonshine Hill in Humble. This is where Humble Oil, now ExxonMobil, was started by Ross Sterling who owned a feed store on Moonshine Hill at the turn of the century.

The three apparatus on display are part of the Moonshine Hill Involuntary Fire Museum in Humble which participates in many local events. Clinton, Bill, and the Moonshine Hill In-Voluntary Fire Department are part of the Texas Gulf Coast SPAAMFAA chapter. Tim Treadway, Bill Lofton, Harvey Trigg, Tom Morrison, and Clinton Johnson have a total of four ladder trucks and ten pumpers housed in Humble.

Numerous vendors set up along the five blocks of Main Street to sell their items. All proceeds from the event benefited the Humble Senior Activity Center in order for them to continue providing programs for seniors such as computer classes and dancing to name a few.

Humble was a pioneer oil boom town. It originated as a crossroad community named for settler Pleasant Smith Humble (1835?-1912), who lived here before 1889, hewing



his timber into railroad ties, mining gravel from his land, keeping store, and serving as justice of the peace. Neighbors included the Bender, Durdin, Isaacks, Lee, Slaughter, and Williams families.

Economic bases were farms and sawmills. The post office opened 1902. In 1904, C. E. Barrett (1866-1926) drilled for oil in this area, securing small production on Moonshine Hill. On Jan. 7, 1905, he brought in the No. 2 Beaty Well which yielded 8,500 barrels a day, opening the great boom. From a village of 700, Humble

grew at once into a town of 20,000. Field production -- the largest in Texas for the year 1905 -- was 15,594,923 barrels of oil. Quite a bit for its day. The field was named for the town. A group of its operators, including Ross S. Sterling, later (1931-33) governor of Texas, in 1911 incorporated a new oil company named for the field, The Humble Oil Company, thus spreading into the annals of world

commerce the town's name. Production from several strata here exceeded the total for fabulous Spindletop by 1946. Known as the greatest salt dome field, Humble still produces and the town for which it was named continues to thrive. Source: www.humblearea.com/history.



*Celebrating
the
Rich History
of
Humble, Texas*



JULY 4TH - COMFORT

BY CHUCK BUSCHARDT & KAREN WITT

Chuck Buschardt was as American as apple pie and ice cream driving his 1926 American LaFrance down the streets of Comfort, Texas during the annual 4th of July parade. Chuck along with Karen Witt and friends Charles and Kate could be seen decked out in red, white, and blue while riding on the patriotically decorated fire truck which won 2nd place in the Antique/Custom Vehicle category. The parade of nearly 100 entries traveled via historic downtown Comfort's High Street ending up at Comfort Park where a Texas-Style BBQ dinner was served with live music, entertainment, and arts & crafts. It was an old-fashioned star-spangled celebration with small town flavor that was enjoyed by all. The Chamber of Commerce did a great job organizing the event. The Beckerei & Co., the bakery open "occasionally on occasions," was featuring soft pretzels & cookies, but we didn't get any due to other festivities. The downtown area was remarkably well-preserved, with dozens of structures dating back to the 1800s. Comfort was established in 1854 by German immigrants. Most of the population today is composed of descendants of those original pioneer families of the 1850s and the 1860s.



4TH JULY - FRIENDSWOOD

BY MARK & NANCY TURVEY

Friendswood by morning, Nassau Bay by evening. Doing a parade is quite an undertaking. We've participated in many throughout the years, but this was our first time to do TWO in ONE DAY!



The Friendswood parade is one of the longest running 4th of July celebrations in the Nation. This was the 116th year! This year's theme was "One Nation, United

We Stand." The grand parade began at 10 AM and traveled down Friendswood Drive, starting at FM 518 and Heritage Drive. I was entrant #146 of about 150 from all over Texas. There were antique cars, corvettes, tractors, bands, motorcycles, city officials, dancers, churches, and just about everything else. The parade concluded at Stevenson Park where food,

games, and live entertainment awaited everyone.

I will say that this year was the most organized I have ever seen. After doing many parades you learn to appreciate the ones that are well organized. I received a call late in the week prior advising of my line-up number, as well as a recommended approach route to my staging location. That was a first.... Upon heading toward the location, I noted that they also had signs indicating which staging group & entry numbers should turn at which street. Having spent 16 years with Friendswood VFD, I knew my way around but to a stranger this would have been perfect. Upon arrival at my staging spot (#146), an area had been marked off & numbers on the street with plenty of room for the length of our truck. A parade staging marshal verified my number & assisted me into my slot. We lucked out & had a great shaded spot from the brutal July morning sun to await our start time & fine tune our decorations. The parade went off without a hitch. We had almost all of the grandkids and some other friends on board. We pulled into FVFD Station 1 to visit with old friends & watch what little was left of the parade. We spent some time in the park & had a good old chili cheese dog before heading home.



The Turvey's



4TH JULY - NASSAU BAY

BY MARK & NANCY TURVEY



OK, now for 4th July Parade #2.

Unlike previous years where it started in the early afternoon, The Nassau Bay parade was an evening parade, line up at 6 PM for the 6:30 PM start to be exact. The lineup was free and started in the parking lot of Gloria Dei. The



parade ended at Lake Park Nassau for the grand finale - the much acclaimed fire works display at 9 PM unabated by the unusually dry weather.

Due to the much smaller geographical area versus Friendswood, Nassau Bay was rather scaled down. However, despite its size, it was heavily attended by the local neighborhood. Kids with decorated bikes, parents with baby strollers, numerous decorated cars, antiques, military vehicles, local dignitaries, golf carts and 4-wheelers, EMS personnel were all present. It really had that small town atmosphere. How nice!



I was a bit concerned about pace when I saw a number of walkers & a few kids electric cars. Once the parade got going it moved OK & the kid cars pulled to the side to let the rest



pass. The end of the parade had a nice circle turnaround for doubling back for anyone not wanting to stay at the festivities.



Nassau Bay posted a parade video on YouTube & we are in it at 1:30. Ironically, for some reason the video image of our truck was reversed! Must

have been an editing thing.... Now I wonder if we could ever do THREE parades in one day! Two was enough!!!

We decided to stop at Kelley's restaurant in League City on the way home for dinner. When we came out we had a crowd of several families with kids around the truck. We let them play on & in the truck & took some photos with them. Of course we had to light up the lights & sirens for them as we pulled away. Good times! Hope to see you all next year!



AHRENS FOX DAY (CONTINUED)

BY MARK TURVEY

have gotten to see. It was a beautiful day, and many people were out enjoying the muster. Cincinnati Fire Buff Steve Hagy and Windsor's Premier Fire Historian Walter McCall were there as were many others. Cameras were clicking - and beeping! - away like crazy! As the day was wrapping up many of the pieces were staged at the back of the lot so that individual photos could be taken. I did get a chance to ride tail board on one of the rigs, not something many get to do any more. Several good videos are available for free viewing of the Ahrens Fox assembly on Youtube by member jealousylane.

The day finished with yet another walk through of this fine museum. One of the highlights of this facility is a working dispatch office and a variety of old alarm pull boxes staged around the facility. If you pull any one of them they ring into the dispatch center, the paper tape printer comes to life and punched out the box code. Museum volunteers are on hand to answer questions and provide interesting facts about the equipment. I highly recommend this museum; you can easily spend a whole day there, and they offer a discount to firefighters. You can check them out on the internet at <http://www.firemuseummd.org/>. Perhaps even plan a visit to coincide with one of their special events.

Ahrens-Fox Day
May 21, 2011

The greatest show since 1982 in Cincinnati. A wide variety of 17 Foxes -- different styles, original paint and restorations -- made for a wonderful show!



Cover Page and Ahrens Fox Artwork by The Fire Museum of Maryland



SODERBECK OPEN HOUSE

BY CHUCK BUSCHARDT

On April 30, following the annual GLIAFFA Fire Flea Market at the Jackson County Fairgrounds, Jackson, MI, Zach and I had the privilege of attending Ken Soderbeck's "Hand-in-Hand" Fire Apparatus Restoration Shop open house to see his latest projects and get a glimpse of his new facilities after the devastating fire that occurred back on the morning hours of April 14, 2010. I was impressed with the amount of work that had been completed to get operational again. In Ken's words: "Agnes and I would like to thank all of you who have helped us during the last few months since the fire at my shop. All of the time, physical work and money that you have donated are appreciated more than you know. I am not sure I would have survived if not for you and your help. We are moving ahead and building new work space in the Long Barn at our farm. I am slowly moving machinery and rigs from the barn on South St. to our new shop as the space is ready."

The steam engine and hand-drawn hose reel that suffered only minor damage in the basement workshop were displayed in the new decorating room. The steamer awaits final decoration once its service origin is uncovered. The metal shop is up and functional for the most part.

I always enjoy trips to see Ken's work, but this time he had something really special for the attending group. Prior to the event, he had restored the piston pump to a 1917 American LaFrance Type 37, 4 cylinder engine. Only 10 of this type were made by ALF, and we believe this to be the only one remaining. Based on our conversation and subsequent research, I believe it to have registration 1657 and it first served in Oakland, CA. Ken located the truck on Craig's List and contacted Warren Lun of Battle Creek, MI, to recommend acquiring the piece. It was quite a site seeing the pumper draft from the pond behind the shop. Everyone present was marveling at the site. I can't wait to see the vehicle complete as only Ken can.



LODD TEXAS FALLEN HEROES

BY MARK TURVEY AND JIM MCGEE



The 2nd Annual Texas Fallen Heroes Memorial Bike Ride and Cookoff held on Saturday, June 25, 2011, in Hitchcock TX was a great success! This event doubled in size and then some from the inaugural event held last year. And the weather was much more favorable!

The festivities commenced with a pancake breakfast at the Cy-Fair VFD Station 11 in Cypress. Afterwards a wreath laying ceremony was held in honor our fallen fire-fighters and EMS providers. From there, motorcycles rode through scenic routes in Harris, Fort Bend, Brazoria, and Galveston Counties. The ride ended at the Galveston County Fairgrounds in Hitchcock. From noon - 9 PM, there was a barbecue cook-off, live entertainment, a children's play area, static displays of fire & EMS equipment, antique fire trucks Fire Muster, vendors, and much more. Best part was the FREE ADMISSION!!!!

"The muster had a respectable showing," notes Jim McGee. "Grannie from League City, a 1955 International chassis (above) was there as well as Mark Turvey's Ford/FMC (above, right). They had a tanker setup to feed lines for the kids to knock down fires in two house cutouts. There were a lot of cook-off booths including the one from two HFD station crews that were decorated for the event (below, left). There were some new apparatus with pretty neat accessories like a rescue



pumper with built-in awning and built-in fans complete with misting coolers."

Mark Turvey, coordinator, provides an event summary: "I believe there were approximately 47 teams in the cookoff, 206 motorcycle riders, 18 fire apparatus (22 on scene), and 4 live bands. It was a hot day but we still had lots of visitors & a good time was had by all. Some interesting highlights were a fire sprinkler demo trailer where demonstrations were conducted on just how effective sprinklers are for containing fire, and arson detection dog demonstrations. There were many things to do, which I didn't have a chance to fully look around but by all expectations this event will continue to grow. The muster really turned out well & we hope this event will grow as well. Special thanks to ALL who took the time to bring trucks out and participate, to Michael Turvey and Ken Paradowski for managing and judging the event (below, center). A special thanks to Kim Stellhorn, new TGCC member, for helping to set up." Some of the Fire Muster winners include: Best antique prior to 1960 – League City VFD; Best Antique after 1960 – Nancy Turvey, Best Pumper – Marathon Texas City; Best Rescue – Fulshear Simonton (below, right); Best Aerial Ladder – BP Texas City; Judges Favorite – Santa Fe Fire & Rescue; Best Brush Truck – Hitchcock VFD; Best Command – SETRAC (South East Texas Regional Advisory Committee).



Application for Membership

TEXAS GULF COAST CHAPTER
Society for the Preservation and Appreciation of Antique Motor Fire
Apparatus in America
(SPAAMFAA)

Please mail this application with \$20 dues made payable to:

Texas Gulf Coast Chapter of SPAAMFAA

PO Box 697

Bellaire TX 77402

Name: _____ E-Mail: _____

Signature: _____

Street or Box No. _____

City: _____ State: _____ Nine Digit Zip: _____

Phone: Home: _____ Cell: _____

Business: _____ Pager: _____

How did you hear about us? Web page _____ Friend _____ Publication _____ Muster _____ Newsletter _____

Other (please specify) _____

Interests: Collecting Fire Equipment _____ Photography _____ Attending Musters _____ Parades _____

Restoration Activities _____ Helmets/Gear _____ Other (please specify) _____

Fire Department or SPAAMFAA Affiliation: _____

If you own a piece of firefighting apparatus that is at least 25 years old, please provide the following information. Attach separate sheet if multiple vehicles. Ownership of apparatus is not required to join Texas Gulf Coast Chapter

Year: _____ Make: _____ Type: (Pumper, Aerial, etc.) _____

Mfg. Model: _____ Mfg. Serial #: _____

Pump Make: _____ Pump Size GPM: _____ Tank Size: _____

Previous Owner and History of Rig: _____

Membership in Texas Gulf Coast Chapter is open to all upon application to the Board of Directors and payment of annual dues. Join today and share in the preservation and appreciation of fire fighting and antique fire apparatus.

All new members are also encouraged to join the National SPAAMFAA Chapter. National SPAAMFAA provides additional resources for restoration and insurance for all sponsored events. National Membership is mandatory for Officers of the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter

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*To stimulate and cultivate interest in the restoration, preservation,
and operation of antique fire apparatus*

TGCC HALL OF FLAME: 1952 FORD/BARTON-AMERICAN



Member Bill
Lofton owns
this 1952
Ford F-7/
Barton-
American,
ex-Lake Lee-
lanau
(Michigan)
Fire Dept.,
Engine #26