

The *Olde Fire Bell*

Spring 2014

Quarterly Newsletter of The Texas Gulf Coast Chapter of SPAAMFAA



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Member Artist Donates Work in Memory of WWII Waddy Young

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A letter from the Chapter President



You ever notice how things change? We are all nostalgic to a certain extent and I believe that everyone has some level of difficulty with change. Our group started in the 1970's in the

Bellaire area. Church Buschardt brought home a beautiful old Seagrave Ladder truck with a V12 and partially hydraulic ladder. Like a virus, the fire truck bug began infecting people and a large group started hanging around Chuck's place. Some of them bought trucks of their own and, as we all know, Chuck brought home a few more. Since then our level and types of activities has varied but has always continued in some capacity.

In the early days, we probably had more support from local fire departments. As time passed, we relied more on community events and local activities. Originally members were more localized and today's members are spread out over a much larger area. Gas prices along with other logistical challenges make the number of trucks at a single event fewer, but we are represented in many more events, locally and nationally.

We are now nearly 40 years old as a group, well known in our area, and growing. I sometimes wonder if we are accomplishing as much as we once did or if we need to change the way our club functions. At the Convention in June, I found out that 4 people were responsible for putting on the previous convention, and I listened to stories of strife in many chapters. I really appreciate the fact that our group has soldiered on doing all the things that it does. This is truly outstanding because it is still so much fun and together we make it look easy.

Keep it up and above all enjoy doing it! Your President, Clinton Johnson.



Upfront Newsline

Welcome to the second 2014 edition of *The Olde Fire Bell*. Greetings again to all. We had a great turnout at Summer National in Columbus, and some surprises, too! A member was honored with a special feature in Galveston newspaper. Our Chapter was one of the sponsors at the BBQ Cookoff fundraiser for the FallenTexas First Responders at Sam Houston Race Park. Last month, we mentioned Clinton Johnson had decided to retire; this month, we congratulate Bill Wicox.

Scott Mellott is at it again. In 2012, he published a HFD pictorial history book that covered the years 1895 to 1980. For the past 18 months, he has been working on next book which covers the HFD history from 1980 to 2014. This book will soon be available; for information on how to order your copy, go to www.hfdbook.com.

Good news: our hearts are warmed by the news that Charlie Womack's outlook is good following a recent stroke.

Business cards, banners, and magnetic signs are available to those attending Club events. What a great way to publicize and gain visibility...not to mention new members! Contact Clinton Johnson.

Chapter Meeting Summary

April: Members thanked Clinton for the great job organizing the Pumpnic at the Bella Woods Association park. New Member Committee chair, Bill Wilcox, mentioned a number of new members have been attracted to the club. Tim Treadway and Bob Robertson made an arch with their ladder trucks and hung a flag at the Humble Civic Center Rotary Event. Joe Brantley built his backyard fire station for his 700 LaFrance. Five members mentioned their plans to attend the Summer National Muster.

May: Clinton Johnson reported that business cards, banners, and magnetic signs were received. Jim McGee reported on the passing of National Corresponding Secretary George Valrance; Pete West will replace him. Kathryn Peters reported that Vince Montalbano is putting together an event for the Houston Fire Museum called 5-Alarm, Fun Day Sunday. It is planned for October 19th. Kim Stellhorn went to Spring Festival at a Santa Fe school, passing out fire helmets.

June: Deer Park Fire Truck Parade and FireFest at HFD Academy will both be on October 4th. Joe Brantley has a number of old videos he can bring to show; he will get them converted from VHS to digital.





Tool Box Topics



Looking Fine at 69!

From the words of Chuck Buschardt: "Once again my beautiful wife has managed to surprise me on my birthday. This year, I was at the National SPAAMFAA membership meeting in Columbus, Ohio when Teresa Johnson, Kathy Wilcox, and my wife (dressed in my bunker pants and helmet),

walked in with a birthday banner and cake. The entire room of about 100 plus members sang "Happy Birthday". The cake was worth the embarrassment. Thanks also to David Napier and Bill Davis for helping Karen pull off the surprise, and thanks to all who participated in embarrassing me on my last birthday in my 60's."



July 4th Events

Top photo: Bob Robertson did a fund raiser at a Humble local restaurant called the Veranda. Unfortunately, he got caught in a horrible thunder storm on the way back: "Drats, 3 hours of cleaning ALFie wasted. Oh well, the day was fun, and now I have another excuse to visit my New Old friend ALFie."

We weren't lined up with any other fire apparatus, but retired HFD Chief Bill Hausinger (who was riding plugs on the tailboard) kept telling them they needed to move us. So when the parade started, they somehow managed to fit us in with a couple of FVFD pieces, even though the bulk of the fire apparatus had already gone. We saw the Stelhorns on the sidelines, and got a text from one of the Model T Club members who was evidently in the crowd. You never know who is going to pop up."



Terry Parker's fire truck participated in the Friendswood parade. Comments Terry: "The parade went off without a hitch."



Photo History Research

Since acquiring their Harrisburg Mack, Kim and Cindy Stellhorn have been making an annual trip to the Harrisburg Pump Primers Muster, held at the River Front Park. 2014 was no exception. The next edition of *The Olde Fire Bell* will feature photos from the trip.

They collect memorabilia not only about their truck (See Facebook - Mary Austin Volunteer Hose Company) but on this trip obtained photos of Steve Dalpe's 1941 ALF, ex-Middletown Rescue Hose Company No. 3. Many thanks to the Stellhorns for their effort.





Bill Wilcox Retirement Ceremonies

By Terry Parker



On February 22, 2014 the Friendswood Volunteer Fire Department officially thanked Bill Wilcox for his 53 years of service to the Texas fire service. Bill retired from the Friendswood department in October of 2013 after having joined in 1974. The retirement party drew people from all over who were able to give testimony to how deeply he affected everyone in all of the organizations he worked with in his career. A few of those present represented the Friendswood Volunteer Fire Department, Seabrook Volunteer Fire Department, Forest Bend Volunteer Fire Department, Houston Fire Department, Pearland Fire Department, Galveston County Fire Fighters Association, Texas State Firemen's and Fire Marshal's Association, and the City of Friendswood.

Bill began as a volunteer in Seabrook and worked as a firefighter at the Manned Spacecraft Center in Houston before going into the Army and serving in Vietnam. After military service he joined the Houston Fire Department but stayed active in many volunteer fire service organizations including the Galveston County Firefighters Association, Harris County Firefighters Association, and Texas State Firemen's and Fire Marshal's Association. While with the Friendswood department, Bill served as Assistant Fire Chief, Fire Chief (four times), and Fire Marshal.

Although Bill is technically retired from all active fire service except the Pagosa Springs Volunteer Fire Department in Colorado, he has been seen lurking at many of the larger fire scenes lately, always careful to stay out of the way. Seeing as how he began his fire service career as a junior member prior to being eligible for full membership, no one really expects him to ever fully give it up.

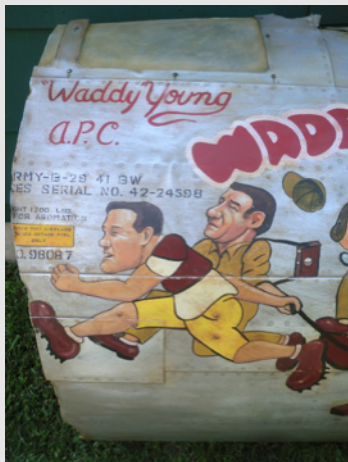
As all of us in Gulf Coast SPAAMFAA know, Bill could never have been anything else in life except a fireman. And we are all the better for it!





Front-Page Feature

By Jason Barnett



Hey — I'm on the front page of the Galveston Daily News paper!

Today - April 17th - was the official unveiling of a piece of nose art that has been in the works for almost two years. I painted this piece on a section of the roof milled from the 1942 Lockheed Lodestar that I hauled out of a junk yard in Galveston a few years ago. The airplane had been destroyed by Hurricane Ike in 2008, and it had once been the property of the Lone Star Flight Museum in Galveston. Some time ago, I was talking with the folks at the museum about the nose art replica pieces that they have displayed on the wall. The museum is often the destination for educational school trips, and the folks at the museum find it a bit difficult to explain the half naked women painted on the other art pieces in the museum. So, the museum president often pulls up an image on his phone of the B-29 "Waddy's Wagon" to show kids that not all WWII airplanes had naked women painted on them.

Waddy Young, the pilot of the B-29 and the subject of the nose art, was an all-star football player for Oklahoma State in the 1930's and briefly a professional football player before going off to fight the Germans in the war, and later piloting B-29 bombers against the Japanese. On return from one mission while flying in formation, one of the B-29s in the group had fallen behind and was being attacked by Japanese fighter planes. Waddy and his crew broke formation and flew to assist the stricken B-29 and were presumed to have been shot down as neither B-29 was ever seen again. Waddy and his crew gave their lives fighting in WWII.

When I heard the passion of the story being told there at the Lone Star Flight Museum, it was clear to me that I needed to make them a "Waddy's Wagon" art piece that they can use as an aid to tell the story and educate the public. So after, nearly two years of laziness on my part, I finally finished this piece and donated it to the museum today. I painted the roughly 1/2 scale piece to look like it was cut from a plane found rotting away in the jungle, as if maybe they had actually safely crashed landed on some island and lived happily ever after instead of going down in the sea.



League City VFD Parade

By Terry Parker

I was able to take my 1925 Model T chemical truck to the League City parade today celebrating their 60th Annual Village Fair and the 75th anniversary of the League City Volunteer Fire Department. Gary Walding had his beautiful Mack there also. The picture with four people in it is my step-mother Betty, my dad Tom Parker (who made the hand pumper and will celebrate his 90th birthday this August), my wife Sue and myself. The gentleman riding with me in the parade is Bill Hausinger who retired from HFD as a Chief Dispatcher in the early seventies.





Engine Rebuild for '48 Mack

By Clinton Johnson

Moonshine Hill IFD Engine 1, the 1948 Mack 45S from Bellaire, Tx., on the operating table awaiting its engine exchange. A loose harmonic balancer spelled the end of its drive shaft and necessitated an engine re-build. This 500 gpm engine was refurbished in 1990 for use as a pumper and brush truck by the Pecan Grove Volunteer Fire Department. Clinton Johnson purchased the truck from Pecan Grove in 1998. The rig is original except for the chevrolet motor and transmission installed during the re-furb by Pecan Grove VFD.

Seen here between Engine 1 and its motor, is chief mechanic Derek Reichle in charge of the rigs engine overhaul and transplant. The weather was really cooperative for Texas, it never got below 95 degrees but the humidity stayed pretty low at about 85%. We had a little relief on one day when it got down to



95. What a relief!! Derek performs final inspection to Engine 1's rebuild before re-install at the Moonshine Hill IFD maintenance facility. (also known as the Central Station, the warehouse, the mess, whatever.)

MHIFD Engine 1 is back on the road again for all the future events.

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: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: Home: _____ Cell: _____

Work: _____ Other: _____

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/Patches ____ 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 a separate sheet if multiple vehicles. Ownership of apparatus is not required to join the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter

Year: _____ Make: _____ Type (pumper, aerial, etc.): _____

Mfg. Model: _____ Mfg. Serial #: _____

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

Previous Owner and History of Rig: _____

Membership in the 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 encouraged to join 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.



Texas Gulf Coast Chapter of
SPAAMFAA
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President - Clinton Johnson
Vice President - Ken
Paradowski
Treasurer - Tom McDonald
Secretary - Jim McGee
Newsletter & Website - Steve
Dalpe

1946 Ford Howe Owned by the Cajun Fire Museum



1946 Ford Howe ex-Fernville PA VFD. Housed at Cajun Fire Museum Breaux Bridge LA. 500 GPM pump with 298 CUID V-8 Flathead. 13,000 odometer miles

