

THE OLDE FIRE BELL

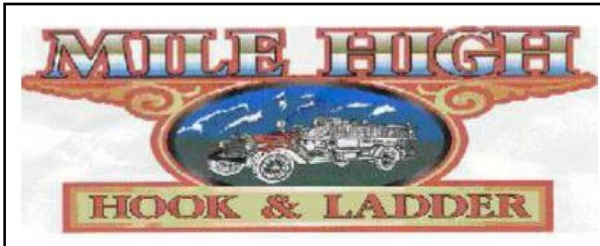
SUMMER 2010

GULFCOASTSPAAMFAA.ORG

SINCE 1975

DENVER SPAAMFAA SUMMER NATIONAL

Our SPAAMFAA Summer events actually began the week-end before in Pagosa Springs Colorado hosted by Kathy and Bill Wilcox. Jim McGee decided we



needed to have a treasure hunt for our Colorado trip, so he sent out a picture of the cutest little Fire Station located SOMEWHERE in Colorado. More on that later! All who attended the pre-muster activities had a wonderful time. Clinton and Teresa Johnson, and Jim and Cheryl McGee flew into Denver and took the scenic route to Pagosa Springs sightseeing all the way.

We drove up Pikes Peak (elevation 14,110) and felt the effects of thin air (where's the oxygen bar?), stopped to shop at Garden of the Gods, then a drive through the mountains before we reached our destination. After staying up that night visiting and sharing our trip stories, who would think the next morning we would awaken to find Clinton shooting varmints from the second

floor porch of the cabin! Not to worry early birds, each dawn found Cheryl McGee watching the sunrise (she's the early bird of

the group!) The guys visited EVERY Fire Station in Pagosa Springs.

Kathy planned a day in Creede, Colorado to visit an underground Fire Station, Old Coal Mine, and Train Museum located in the Train Depot. Hungry for ice cream, Bill Wilcox suggested we make a stop at the original fire station in Creede, which was turned into a restaurant - can you believe that the SIREN was still attached to the roof! It started hailing during our ice cream adventure and by the time it stopped everything looked like it was covered by fresh snow - the guys rushed out to take pictures of course!

Next there was the White Water Rafting trip!!! After loading (continued on page 4)

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CALENDAR

- Future meeting dates: Monday at 7 PM: October 18 and November 15 at the Community National Bank on Bellaire Blvd. No meeting in December
- East Texas Historical Fire Society, 25th Annual Muster. October 22- 24, 2010
- SPAAMFAA Winter National, Dallas TX, February 23-26, 2011. Sponsored by The North Texas Historical Fire Society and The Texas Fire Museum



Left: Chuck Buschardt stands besides 1938 Ahrens Fox ex-Sandusky OH, Hercules HXE Engine, 1000 GPM AF pumper. Below: 1901 Waterous Steamer, 600 GPM, manufactured in Branford, Ontario



UPFRONT

This month's *The Olde Fire Bell* features several articles about the Denver National. Nine Texas Gulf Coast Chapter members attended not only the muster but a separate, pre-event at Pagosa Springs, under the sponsorship of Bill and Kathy Wilcox. Their exclusive experiences are presented in this newsletter. *The Olde Fire Bell* thanks the contributing members.

Congratulations to Chuck Buschardt for being the high bidder on the 1976 ex-Houston Fire Department's Mack Funeral Coach. It will remain in Houston! Chuck was the winning bidder in what was a rather aggressive bidding event.

See Page 3 for more details.

And congratulations to Clinton and Teresa Johnson for their latest truck acquisition. Although new to Moonshine Hill, it's been a "family" vehicle for many years. Read more about it on Page 10.

The SPAAMFAA Winter National will be quickly upon us, with every reason to attend. Once again, the Dallas Texas Fire Museum/North Texas Historical Fire Society will be sponsoring the event at their 2600 Chalk Hill Road facilities, as well as several surrounding local features. Mark your calendars for both events.

Traditionally, October marks several important events. The East Texas His-

torical Fire Society is sponsoring their 25th (has it been that many years already!) annual muster at the beautiful Lake Palestine Campground. Always a memorable event! On October 9th, Houston Fire Museum's Annual Fire Fest will be held at the Val Jahnke Training Facility. It's been an HFD/HFM tradition for over 20 years. There will be events for all ages. New events include invitations to Wings Over Houston and NASA Ballunar Festival.

With so many events in the 3rd quarter, let's make recruiting a priority. We have gained several new members and much visibility in the past year.

CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

BY CHERYL MCGEE

The following is a summary of the Summer monthly meetings:

July: A contingency of five members and one potential new member discussed July 4th events and the dedication ceremony at Station 20. Focus was placed on upcoming events: Sept 24th Houston Fire Museum's "Rescue Me!" Gala; Oct 2nd Deer Park Fire Truck Parade; Oct 9th Houston FireFest at the HFD Training Academy; Oct. 22-23, East Texas Historical Fire Society; Oct 22-23 Wings Over Houston; Nov 25 Thanksgiving Parade; and Dec 11 Friendswood Lighted Christmas Parade.

August: Jim McGee presided over 14 members that were present to discuss Summer's second-half activities. New members Angela and Roger Rayne discussed FireFest 2010 events. Deer Park Fire Prevention Parade, East Texas Historical Fire Society (Tyler), and the National in Dallas were all discussed to different degrees. Cheryl McGee took a head count of those planning to attend Tyler. Bidding for The Houston Fire Department's Mack Funeral Coach had been extended due to lack of bids. Cheryl proposed a Christmas Dinner Social on December 18th at the Spaghetti Warehouse.

September: President Jim McGee opened the meeting a 7 PM with seven members present. The agenda included discussions about participation and logistics of the Deer Park Parade and the Houston Fire Museum FireFest at the Fire Academy on October 9th. Tyler is having their annual muster, and this year marks their 25th. Jim communicated on a new event - Johnson Space Center Balloon Festival. Closing out the evening were continued discussions about the Thanksgiving Day Parade, Chapter Christmas Party, and meeting at a future car club show.

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:

Bill & Kathy Wilcox Clinton Johnson

Jim & Cheryl McGee David White

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

BRIEFLY

2011 SPAAMFAA NATIONAL

The Texas Fire will be hosting the Winter National at Road facilities. In restoration demon-



be a host of local Sixth Floor Museum, Cowboys Stadium, Grapevine Vintage Railroad, Fort Worth Stockyards, Dallas Fire Department Shops, and surrounding Area Fire Departments. Check out their website for more details. Sign up early to show your support!

Museum of Dallas SPAAMFAA 2011 their 2600 Chalk Hill addition to on-site strations, there will attractions including seum, new Dallas

MACK FUNERAL COACH

Member Chuck Buschardt was the high bidder for The City of Houston's Mack CF-600 Funeral Coach that was recently auctioned at Public Surplus, starting August 11, 2010. There was a total of 27 bids, with interest of personnel from other states. The Mack Funeral Coach originally served a HFD Engine 44. The pumper was refurbished to the black/red paint combination in 2000, however it served as funeral coach for a few years before that. It was recently replaced in March 2010 by another conversion, this time a 1995 Seagrave that originally served as Engine 28. Top photo courtesy of Robert Knowles, the bottom courtesy Ken Paradowski.



1951 FORD

It appears that Bill Lofton's new acquisition, a 1951 Ford F-7 of River Oaks TX, is a little camera shy, which leads a lot of us to wonder just what this vehicle looks like. Well, after extensive internet searching, we suspect the vehicle resembles this image. We can't wait to see this pair rolling along at Texas Gulf Coast Chapter musters and other events. Hopefully it will be operable for the 2011 Moonshine Hill Invitational!



ANTIQUITY

Here's a delivery photo from the past! Negative plate number 6407 shows Houston Fire Department's Registration 5349 a type 75 pumper, 750 GPM rotary pump with 105 HP



motor. It was released from the factory on 10/27/25. At the same time, Houston bought a Type 17-6 85 ft. aerial which means it was a Type 17 tractor, 6 cylinder engine, 85 ft. wooden ladder. The pumper photo was acquired by a TGCC member from the collection of late Richard Adelman of Memphis, Tennessee.

PORT AUTHORITY

I found this beautiful 1947 Dodge/Darley being displayed at the La Porte LEPC (Local Emergency Planning Committee) Safety Fair. It was the Port's first fire engine. It had been sitting hidden in a warehouse for many years. It was discovered a while back buried under a bunch of stuff. A group of volunteers composed of the POHA (Port of Houston Authority) FD maintenance group and some other volunteers took the truck all the way to the frame and did a full-up restoration. The truck runs and pumps beautifully, and has a current valid state inspection sticker. Hats off to the team that did such a great job restoring this beauty! Details provided by POHA FD Captain Stan Kozlowski. Article submitted by Mark Turvey.



2011 SUMMER NATIONAL

The Central New York Chapter will be hosting the 2011 Summer, Syracuse SPAAMFAA Summer Convention and Muster. The next time the Summer National will be in Syracuse is 2014.



DENVER SPAAMFAA SUMMER NATIONAL (CONTINUED)

BY CHERYL MCGEE



into the boats, we were instructed to NEVER LEAVE THE BOAT. Next, we ventured to the Wilcox's to the top of a nearby mountain at a Forest Service Watch Tower to eat lasagna. The view was breathtaking! Last meal at the Wilcox's Cabin was steak grilled by Kent,

good wine, with even better friends!

After the Pagosa activities, we packed and were ready to travel to Denver; the weather couldn't have been better for a road trip! We stopped for lunch and treasure hunt in Leadville (elevation 10,152). We were towing the Friendship Fire Jeep behind so had to keep going forward - no backing up or tight turns for us!!

Remember the fire station hunt. WOULD YOU BELIEVE CLINT JOHNSON FOUND OUR FIRE STATION!!! Just so all of you know that this was legit - the fire station is located at Exit 240 off of I-70. It was soooo cute. We found another just like it a few streets down. These little stations from the late 1800's just housed hose carts.

MUSTER ACTIVITIES IN DENVER COLORADO

We finally arrived in Denver all in tact with our treasures and quickly found the rest of the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter Members. Thursday, the guys went on a tour of their own, visiting Denver Station #1, the Denver Fire Museum (which



was GREAT!), Colorado Railroad Museum with a ride on the Galloping Goose #7 as the highlight of the day. The ladies set off for a tour of Celestial Seasonings tea and lunch; what fun for those of us who love tea! Then it was off to the Leaning Tree Museum of Western Art - the bronze statues in the garden outside of the Museum were wonderful. Last but not least was the tour of Molly Brown House.

The house itself was magnificent! There was quite the discussion whether or not Molly was accepted by society at that time or if she was just too flashy. Just ask our own Kathy

Wilcox as she has seen the MOVIE and by now has read the BOOK. Absolutely no one could convince Kathy that Molly was accepted into Denver society and was not the outcast the movie suggested. Guess we'll just have to wait until Kathy finishes the book!! Friday we all set out for Estes Park where the Estes Park Volunteer Fire Department and Doug Klink put on a great muster with several of his pieces of apparatus. We had lunch in downtown Estes Park and got a chance to shop. On the way to Doug Klink's Reliance Fire Museum and Restoration Facility for a tour, we drove by the historic Stanley Hotel, opened in 1909 as a resort by the inventor of Stanley Steamer automobile. Doug Klink's facility was quite a site with approximately 20 beautiful pieces of apparatus to take pictures of and kick tires! Shown below is one of the Museum's truck, a 1967 Pierce '75 foot Snorkel originally from Parsons, Kansas. What fun we all had!

Saturday was all about getting up early, getting the Fire-fighting Jeep ready for the parade, and then meeting up with Bill to help with his Vendor Booth. There was all kinds of activity going on at the Muster site throughout the day - Emergency Helicopter landing, static displays, fire trucks putting out different types of fires, kids obstacle course. Saturday evening was the non-traditional banquet in the Host Hotel. After a nice meal, we were entertained by an 1890's style saloon girl show. Great prizes consisting of a fire quilt, fire blanket, great wine, and great conversation with friends ended the evening! Sunday morning found the Host Hotel lobby filled to the brim with old and new friends saying their goodbyes until the next Muster.



STATION 20 DEDICATION

BY JIM MCGEE

Saturday, July 20, 2010, at 10:00 a.m., the old Magnolia Park City Hall was inducted into the Historical Registry, and SPAAMFAA members were present to participate in the events. This marked the second recent event whereby both SPAAMFAA Texas Gulf Coast Chapter and the Houston Fire Museum members were collectively present.

The event was hosted by the Magnolia Park Historical Preservation Association, Harris County Historical Commission and Special Recreation Services, Inc. Community leaders, including Mayor Annise Parker and Council Member James Rodriguez, joined for the dedication ceremony off Avenue F in Southeast Houston.

Constructed in 1923, the building originally served as the Magnolia Park City Hall. The building is located on 7301 Avenue F. In addition to furnishing administrative offices, the building provided facilities for city jail and central fire station. In 1926, the facility became Fire Station 20 after the City of Houston annexed Magnolia Park. It served as a fire station for almost 50 years, when in 1973, a new station was built on 6902 Navigation. Since 1973, the old fire station has been used as a community center.

Representing the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter and the Houston Fire Museum were Angela Rayne, Houston Fire Museum Director, Roger Rayne, Angela's husband, and Chapter President



Jim McGee. "We're pleased the Houston Fire Department's Old Station 20 has been designated as an official Texas Historical Marker. It is well deserved; many people have benefited from its services," noted Angela Rayne of the Houston Fire Museum. "It was such an honor to represent the Houston Fire Museum and SPAAMFAA at this dedication. SPAAMFAA's antique fire apparatus with the new Pumper from current Station 20, made such a wonderful illustration of the history of Station 20 that we were there to celebrate. It is so nice to see all of these organizations working together to commemorate the fire service's impact on the community that it serves."

"The Texas Gulf Coast Chapter SPAAMFAA provided an antique apparatus for the dedication at the request of the Houston fire Museum. We chose a rig appropriate to the era when the building served as HFD Station 20," stated Jim McGee. The "Lincoln" as it is affectionately known, shown below, is a 1948 American LaFrance 700 Series that served at York (Pennsylvania) Fire Department's Lincoln Station. "However, our usually dependable Lincoln experienced fuel filter problems. Thanks to some quick road-side engineering and the efforts of Ken Paradowski, we were back on the road in less than fifteen minutes and ended back at the shop safely."

Below: Houston Mayor Annise Parker as well as Council Member James Rodriguez, Precinct 5 Constable Victor Trevino, and a representative from Harris County Sheriff Adrian Garcia's Office were on hand to give remarks commemorating the Station 20 dedication.

Right: 1948 American LaFrance 700 Series, Y.F.D. Engine 9

Bottom Right: Overview of the crowd gathered for the events

Photos courtesy Jim McGee. Events details from KTRK-TV/DT, and Christopher Varela Magnolia Park Historical Preservation Association 832-298-9257, HFD Public Affairs Office



PAGOSA SPRINGS MINI MUSTER

Kathy and I would like to thanks everyone that made the Pagosa Springs event a wonderful experience. We enjoyed planning the activity as much as the attendees enjoyed the festivities. We had a fun time in Pagosa Springs! Thankfully, the weather was spectacular, river water was cold, and friendship was warm!

While we waited for the rest of the crew to arrive June 12th, Kent Cullom and I partook of activities hosted by Pagosa Fire Protection District and others at a local Safety Fair. When the others arrived the next morning, the guys visited several of Pagosa's seven fire stations.

Pagosa Fire Protection District Station 3

Is the fire training field, drill tower, and houses Engine 3 (2002 Smeal, 1500, 1,000, 20F) Tender 3 (2,000 gallon tanker), the Department's 1955 International Howe 500 GPM pumper, and Brush 3 (S&S FS Type 3- 750/750 Engine), and the fire safety house.

Station 4

The current maintenance station. This year the shop has rebuilt a heavy brush truck, renovated/remounted a FS Type 6 Engine, and is finishing a second brush Type 6 Engine on a new 2010 Dodge 4 X 4 chassis. It also houses Engine 4 (2002 Smeal, 1,500; 1,000; 20F), Brush 4 (Ford 4 X 4, FS Type 6) and Maintenance 4 (2009 Dodge 4 X 4, with boom, PFD shop built). It also serves as storage area for PFD tractor/backhoe, transporter, Dodge snow plow, and a Ford p/u utility truck used for hydrant inspections.

Station 6

Home of Engine 6. A blend of FMC (John Bean), Omega, and Hendrickson 1,250/500 pumper.

Bob Frye treated us to a visit of U.S. Forest Service antique

Willy's Jeep, (P/U) front mount pumper, very original, which still attends parades, safety fairs, and other fire prevention duties!

While we still had the energy, we drove up an old forest service road covered in mule-ears and lupines to eat a delicious lasagna dinner served alfresco under the watchful, towering, retired 8 Mile Mesa, Forest Service Watch Tower. This overlooks the valleys of Pagosa Springs, CO, which is quite a sight at sunset on a beautiful evening. We hardly missed actually venturing into the belly of the watchtower itself, having received quite a history lecture from the forest service guru himself, retired ranger Bob Frye and wife Shelly. We dutifully replaced the gate we removed after finding the tower door itself was well padlocked with a new and different key unknown to Ranger Bob. We did enjoy quite an after diner climb up the stairs of the watch tower. We headed back down the trail happy in the knowledge that the new satellite equipment was safe and secure from trespassers.



The next day, some enjoyed an afternoon of rafting the San Juan River. This had its exciting moments while others partook to working on the Wilcox's 1944 Willy's firefighting Jeep to ready it for a trip to Denver. We appreciate Tom Herman of the Old Dominion Historical Fire Society for letting us use the picture above. After returning to warm, dry clothing, we partook of hamburgers and hot dogs graciously grilled on the deck by our Santa Monica guest.

Another morning we ventured over Wolf Creek Pass for breakfast at the Logger in South Fork en route to historic Creede, to tour of the Underground Mining Museum, Underground Fire Station, ice cream at the Old Firehouse B&B and Ice Cream parlor. A display of nature's wonder of a hailstorm with resulting white cars and streets in June, and a shortened

BY BILL AND KATHY WILCOX



tour of the old mines along East Willow Creek above Creede. We even stopped by and waved to the old Wilcox family cabin. Surprising, it is now owned by a couple from League City, TX whom apparently also fell in love with the forests and mountains of southern Colorado.

It was now time to caravan with the antique Jeep to the real muster in Denver, and what a scenic drive it proved to be through the middle of the state. We enjoyed a wonderful lunch and antique stop in Leadville, CO, and arrived at the Hilton Highlands Ranch Garden Inn ready for more fun. Meeting up with more of the Gulf Coast SPAAMFAA members, we readied for Denver's venue.

Cheryl McGee, Kathy Wilcox, and Teresa Johnson were happy to join the other women in touring Celestial Seasonings operation, the Leaning Tree Art Museum and the wonderful Molly Brown Home in Denver while Jim, Bill, Clinton and others toured the Colorado Railroad Museum riding the Galloping Goose Snowplow Train, the Denver Fire Museum, and the Golden Fire Station.

Chuck and Zack Buschardt, along with Eric Bergmann seemed to be in their element when the rest of us arrived at Rocky Mountain State Park to see the wonderful display and pumping of numerous apparatus including the Klink's Steamer and

American LaFrance. The mountains made quite a display background. Houston Fire Museum Director Angela Rayne joined us on the tour bus and later at the SPAAMFAA dinner and filled in information on questions we had about her old stomping ground. Then we were off and running to Doug Klink's wonderful facility and collection in Estes Park.

There was a wonderful parade in Littleton with Clinton and Teresa Johnson representing Texas Gulf Coast Chapter driving the freshly rehabbed firefighting Jeep. The muster and flea market seemed to be enjoyed by all with



some selling, some buying, some swapping, not many just looking. After a quick side trip through a local quilt shop, it was time to prepare for the final gathering...the SPAAMFAA Banquet and "Can-Can" show. Darrell Scott of Garland, Texas joined us at our table for these final festivities. All that was left to be done was kicking back, again with good friends to refresh, catch our breaths, and prepare for the trip home.

DEER PARK FIRE PREVENTATION PARADE

BY STEVE DALPE

On a temperate October 2nd morning, the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter SPAAMFAA joined fourteen other industrial and municipal departments for the annual Deer Park Fire Prevention Parade to commence fire prevention week. The paraders assembled at the Deer Park High School South Campus, then traveled down Center Street to the North Campus High School.

Three trucks from the Chapter were present: 1958 Mack from Meadowmere Park, 1948 American La-France from York, PA Lincoln Station, and 1976 Ford/FMC ex-Clute. Quotes Mark Turvey: "We worked hard to have our truck on the road for this

parade. Needed to install a brake master cylinder which hopefully will fix the last of our brake problems! We haven't made any other parade this year...."

The Lincoln was the only Class A - under 1950 - vehicle and easily took home the oldest participant. The Mack and Ford shared Class B - over 1950 - with the Mack winning that category. Nassau Bay's vehicle, shown on Page 9, won the 2000-up category.

Many thanks to all the TGCC members that came to the event: Bill Lofton, Jim McGee, Eric Bergman, Chuck & Zac Buschardt, Nancy & Mark Turvey, Ken Paradowski, Karen Witt, Steve Dalpe, and Mike Bose.

Participating departments included Shell Deer Park, Nassau Bay, Deer Park (largest assemblage, for obvious reasons!), La Porte, Vopak, Cove, Pasadena, Beach City, Albemarle, Houston HAZMAT, Lubrizol, Harris County, and Pasadena Plastics Complex.



Photos: Top left - Chuck Buschardt navigates 1958 Mack ex-Meadowmere Park, New York. Left - Mark Turvey organizing SPAAMFAA display with his 1976 C-Series Ford/FMC. Bottom left - Shell Deer Park's 1982 Sutphen 90 ft. aerial ladder with 1500 GPM pump. Above - Chapter vehicles lined up along parade route. Right - Fire dog Sparky pays visit to Turvey's antique truck. Page 9, top left - Nassau Bay's award winning Pierce. Page 9, top right - Texas Gulf Coast Chapter members standing on tailboard of 1958 Mack with awards in front of North Campus.



DEER PARK (CONTINUED)



WORD SEARCH

R	P	M	A	C	K	F	D	H	E	R	U	K	S	A	P
M	E	S	O	H	H	R	A	S	Z	E	V	A	D	F	R
I	N	U	G	P	R	E	M	E	A	P	A	U	E	R	A
E	C	E	M	U	S	E	U	M	A	A	N	C	R	G	Q
R	H	D	A	M	E	U	N	N	M	O	Q	E	Q	E	E
P	I	Y	O	P	E	A	U	S	Z	A	E	U	A	A	P
T	T	E	D	E	M	A	P	Z	E	E	I	E	Q	Y	A
E	C	N	A	R	F	A	L	S	T	N	P	I	N	E	S
P	R	O	E	E	A	E	W	A	T	E	R	F	E	A	L
I	O	I	M	M	N	N	U	A	R	E	D	D	A	L	R
P	S	T	F	A	P	G	T	N	S	M	E	E	E	R	O
Y	T	A	A	E	E	I	T	C	S	O	R	O	A	P	D
A	A	T	E	T	Y	N	U	T	O	A	M	A	U	A	A
L	P	S	P	S	A	E	E	Q	E	T	P	E	A	F	I
P	U	S	E	A	G	R	A	V	E	A	E	E	O	E	U
F	H	E	C	S	T	Z	F	E	E	S	U	D	S	U	U

SEAGRAVE
 LAFRANCE
 EQUIPMENT
 FIRE
 ENGINE
 PUMPER
 ALARM
 STATION
 AHRENS
 MACK
 HYDRANT
 HOSE
 PLAYPIPE
 NOZZLE
 MUSEUM
 SPAAMFAA
 WATER
 RESCUE
 LADDER
 QUINT
 STEAMER

SIMMS FIRE APPARATUS

BY CLINTON JOHNSON AND DAVID WHITE



Moonshine Hill has received an addition to its fleet of intrepid Fire Fighting Apparatus. Highlands Fire Department donated Engine 501, a 1948 Simms/GMC 500 gpm combination engine, to the IFD. Engine 501 has been in storage for several years without running. We rolled it out, put in fresh gasoline and a new battery, and drove it home - after a couple of hours work on brakes, corroded wiring, etc. This engine was Highland's first factory built apparatus delivered by Simms Fire Apparatus Co. of San Antonio, TX. Only a few fire apparatus manufacturers have been based in Texas. Simms was one of

these and primarily catered to small rural fire departments.

Locally, Richmond and Rosenberg Fire Departments purchased Simms equipment almost exclusively until the 1980's. Simms was renowned for its simple, robust, and easily maintained equipment. Simms primarily built on commercial chassis, but did build a few customs. Below are pictures of 501, some photos of other Simms Apparatus, and some information about Simms Fire Equipment Company.

My wife Teresa's Father, Francis "Rube" Conley, was a volunteer in the Highlands Fire Department from 1947 till 1997 serving in nearly every position including Chief. He served as Captain on this Engine in the 1950's. Rube passed away last year as a result of a stroke. This makes acquisition and preservation of this Engine very close to our families' hearts. Plans are to maintain it in the condition it was in when it pumped its last major fire at the Warren Plastics Manufacturing on Crosby Lynchburg Rd. in 1974. 501 pumped for 5

hours at full capacity supplying Engine 502 and Booster 503. I manned one of the 2 ½ inch lines off 502.

Texas A & M Fire School had three Sims trucks, 2- 1950 and 1-1967. The '67 was one of the few Custom rigs as it was built on a IH 8190. They mostly built on IH chassis. Simms also built one aerial in its lifetime, a utility aerial for either Wharton or El Campo. I have no idea how many trucks that Sims made, but there were many departments in Texas that used them almost exclusively. San Antonio had 2-4 Sims.

Other manufacturers that built trucks in Texas: Fact, Fire Fox, Texcoach, Southern, Neil, West Fire Apparatus, Simms, Fire Appliance Company.

The first truck built by Simms Fire Equipment Company was delivered to the Nordheim Fire Department in 1926. Simms started making firefighting equipment in 1916. All of their trucks were custom built and individually designed. Simms told us that many Texas municipalities had volunteer fire departments that held barbecues to raise money to buy a chassis and had it delivered to Simms. They then held more barbecues to raise more money to have Simms convert their chassis into a fire truck. Even more barbecues were held to pay for the custom painting - all done by hand, and in real gold leaf. A final barbecue was held to celebrate the delivery of the truck.

Right: Rockdale TX
VFD 727. 1956

Ford/Simms.
RVFD uses this
truck for parades
and pumper team
races.

Below: Simms
Manufacturing Fa-
cilities operated
from 1916 -1990's
in San Antonio TX



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: 1948 SIMMS / GMC



Texas Gulf Coast Chapter Members Clinton & Teresa Johnson are proud owners of this 1948 Simms / GMC 500 GPM Pumper. See Page 10 for more details about this vehicle.