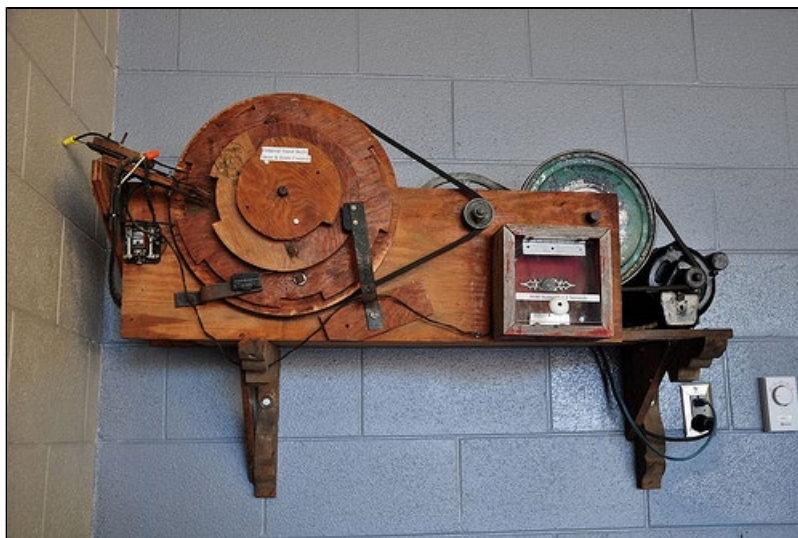


Bay Leaf's Hand-Built Horn and Siren Control

10/21/13 129 W, 1 I - + 8 - 4

The Bay Leaf Fire Department dedicated their new Station 1 yesterday. The ribbon-cutting was conducted in conjunction with an open house. Photographer Lee Wilson was present and has posted [many good photos from the day](#). See also [this set of photos](#) since construction started. The department's placed some historical items on display, such as this hand-built horn and siren control. The belt-device device sounded a repeating series of horn blasts to alert volunteer firefighters. And (or maybe later), triggered a siren that performed the same function. (At least, that's my inference from looking at the photo. Hopefully our readers will tell more.) [See larger photo](#). Next question, what interesting signaling controls have been used in other local fire departments?



Lee Wilson photo

Hopefully they saved the siren as well, even if it's unfortunately a static only display

Jason ([Email](#)) ([Web Site](#)) - 10/21/13 - 13:18

I listened to that siren/horn combination every since I can remember, well at least until it was disabled. As a very small child I could hear it in my room at night and we could always hear it in church at Ridgecrest BC if there was a call on Sunday mornings – especially the horns! The elevation was slightly higher over there, making the siren sound/horn sound very, very close (and was actually only about 3 miles as the crow flies!). When it activated at night, daddy would always get out of bed knowing that Stony Hill's siren would soon follow for mutual aid. Again, "paradise lost" for us old farts on the North side. Reminiscing. ...I can also remember seeing "Adam's Mountain" from my back yard off of NC98. Now, let's see who knows what I am talking about there! All the best to the Bay Leaf community and the fire department on the new station and to the traditions that still are very much alive on the North side!

A.C. Rich - 10/21/13 - 18:06

Here is a picture of the old siren/horn combination taken by some random guy ;)

http://www.jmarcoz.com/sirens/bayleaf_nc..

Not sure what type they are, the siren isn't a Federal because they didn't use C-face motors. Plus, it's missing the housing. Very rare for a siren/horn combination...most of the time you see installations like this the siren is the only alarm used while the horn and it's associated piping are long retired.

Jason ([Email](#)) ([Web Site](#)) - 10/21/13 - 22:29

Clayton used a "fire phone" system. The Clayton PD dispatcher pressed a button on the telephone and it rang every fireman's house with short burst rings, not the standard ring. In the early days you could hear everyone picking up. The dispatcher would talk into the phone to tell where the fire call was. When I started dispatching at Clayton PD I found it quite challenging to tone out the FD on the radio, press the fire phone button and press and hold the manual siren button all while talking over the radio giving out the call. Usually we would wait until we finished the radio broadcast to blow the outside siren or else it would drown out our radio broadcast. Before pagers, Clayton rescue used a phone relay type system. The PD dispatcher knew who the duty crew leader was each night. They would call the crew leader who would in turn call the rest of the crew (or if lucky have their wife to do it while they were driving to the station. Clayton Rescue was the first agency in Johnston County to have pagers. At one time Clayton Rescue was paged by Clayton PD, Rescom and Johnston Central – it just depended who the call went to.

Jason Thompson ([Email](#)) ([Web Site](#)) - 10/22/13 - 01:19

When I first started in the Wake County Fire Service, there were not many of the then-state-of-the-art Minitor I pagers out there. There were some Motorola Directors or Pageboys, but there were a lot more of the Motorola tabletop monitors. There was also a time in the late 1970s when four channel pocket scanners were purchased instead of pagers- they were Fanon brand and there was a mobile charger-amplifier available.

At Yrac we did not get everyone pagers until around 1982-1983.

DJ - 10/22/13 - 09:56

Jason, it might be a Crouse Hinds siren although I do think the housing was on it when I came to Bay Leaf....I remember we had a horn at Wake New Hope when I started in 1980 and that the horn had come from the Westinghouse plant on Capital Blvd. It was a single horn and blew at the top and bottom of the siren cycle. I also remember that we had a brick that we placed on the siren cut off pedal in the radio room since you couldn't hear the radio while the siren was blowing. When I went to New Hope only a handful of people had Minitor I pagers...some had Federal 10-10 monitors and a select few had Motorola Fire Fighter monitors which were very coveted. They were activated not by the Quick Call 2+2 tones but by a single tone encoder that was transmitted directly by the base at Station One. My first pager was a Motorola Pageboy and then I bought a monitor only red Minitor I pager from Robert Bradsher when he received his first department issued two tone alert Minitor I. This was sometime around 1982 and the department purchased grey Minitors instead of the red ones originally bought. Don Adams from Six Forks kept the pagers serviced and when the first Minitor II pagers came along, many members resisted because the amplified chargers on the Minitor I's worked so well. Looking back it amazes me that I slept through listening to all of the pager tones that Central sent out except Wake New Hope.

MTH - 10/22/13 - 21:50

Good history MTH! At my local VFD back in the day, the wife of a fireman who lived across the street from the station would receive the emergency call. She would then walk across the street, open the doors, turn on the lights (if at night), turn on the siren, and write the address on a small chalkboard. She continued to do this up until a couple years ago when the new station was built (although all she had to do then was hit the garage door button from her house, but at night she'd still walk across the street and turn on the lights and write the address on the chalkboard). We still use our siren and bought a new one just a few years ago.

Jason ([Email](#)) ([Web Site](#)) - 10/23/13 - 00:16

If you look at this picture, the siren is on the pole behind the station. It looks like a Federal 5hp.

<http://raleighfiremuseum.org/photos/wake..>

DJ - 10/23/13 - 09:42

Name: (real name
preferred)
E-mail: (optional)
Web Site: (optional)

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