

Fire Tower Model - 1998.231.001

This model, made by John Studd and donated to Museum in 1998, is a reproduction of the fire observation tower that sits next to the Museum.

Following the 'Great Fire of 1916' the Ontario government passed the Forest Fire Prevention Act in 1917. Peter McEwen was appointed District Forester of the Ontario Forestry Branch in Parry Sound in 1922, and with 75 forest rangers began to organize an effective forest protection system. By 1927, the tower was one of 27 across the district used in forest fire detection.

Work was seasonal, beginning in the spring and ending in the fall and towermen had to report to headquarters in Parry Sound every hour during daylight. Using an alidade, a long metal instrument with a fine sight placed on top of a round map glued to a table that could be swung 360 degrees, towermen would get a bearing on a fire and radio the results. When multiple towermen identified a fire the rangers were able to pinpoint the exact location. With the advance in technology the tower network system was abandoned and replaced with the use of aircrafts by 1966.

