



# MARKTOWN UPDATE

A publication of the Marktown Preservation Society

April 2005

## *Springtime in the Region along the ShortShore Line*

Spring is slowly sneaking into Marktown, East Chicago and the greater Calumet Region. You can tell by watching the increased activity. Neighbors are once again out cleaning up from the winter and preparing for what should be a glorious springtime in Marktown and all of East Chicago. The Parks and Recreation Department have already been out to pick up some of the debris that always blows into the parks from God only knows where.

By the time this issue of Marktown Update is released we should begin seeing the return of the birds from their winter homes in the south and the tulips and spring bulbs should be poking their sprouts through the soil.

Spring is a time of new beginnings. It is a time of renewed hope and opportunity for communities such as Marktown. ISG and Ispat Inland are about to become Mittal Steel, the world's largest steel manufacturer and our good friends at US Steel Tin are making plans to build a new boiler house to serve their utility needs. With any luck they will locate it on Riley Road as opposed to the area adjacent to their office complex.

Both the East Chicago Parks Department and the E.C. Central Girl's Softball teams are planning on playing ball in the Marktown Park once again. The tentative agreement to deed the parking lot is on hold until the steel merger is completed and a new Parks Board is appointed and in place.

New computers for the Marktown Commu-

nity Center have been promised by Mayor Pabey via the Information Technology Department, and they too are on hold as we await information in relation to obtaining wireless internet service.

What can we do this year as residents to make this a better, cleaner and safer place to live

and to raise our families? To begin, we can work TOGETHER as a neighborhood. That makes everything better and easier for everyone.

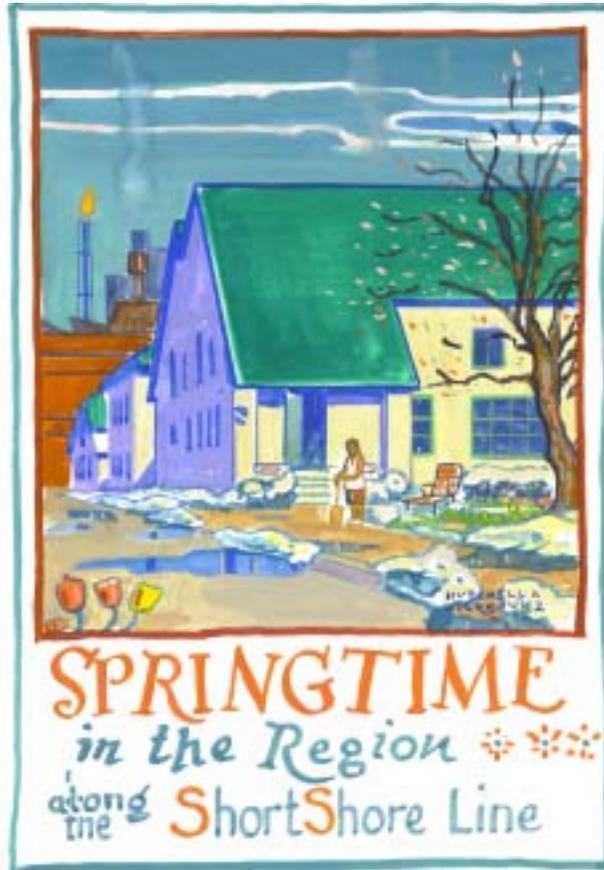
We can look out our windows and look out for each other. Most of the problems that face this neighborhood actually come from within Marktown itself.

We need everyone to get involved in cleaning up, and fixing up their homes. Unlicensed automobiles need to be removed not just from the streets but from the neighborhood. No one wants to look out their second floor windows and see cars parked in someone's yard.

In April and May we will once again make arrangements to have rubbish pick up days scheduled for Marktown. Flyers will be sent out and hopefully people will once again take the opportunity to rid themselves of un-

wanted furniture and other items.

There are a number of special preservation initiatives coming our way in the next year or so. All of them will have a very positive impact on the quality of life of the residents of Marktown. All of them will be reported to you in Marktown Update: YOUR community based newsletter!



*NEW THIS SPRING! For those of you who read The Times, you should have seen this wonderful new illustration of Marktown on Sunday, March 6th. It was a front page illustration by Mitchell Markovitz and it appeared on the Sunday Forum Section. If you would like a reprint or note card of this, please see Judy at the Old Marktown Community Center. Spring has arrived in Marktown!*

visit us on line at [www.marktown.org](http://www.marktown.org)

## Saving The Trees In The Marktown Park: Once AGAIN!



From Marktown Update in April 2004 we can see the extreme measures taken by NIPSCO to trim our park trees.

In April of 2004 we reported that NIPSCO had began a very aggressive tree trimming in the Marktown Park and that Paul Myers and Joe Valdez (then Parks Superintendent) intervened to prevent further damage to the 25 year old Locust trees. While it was their intention to return to the table to discuss the problem with the NIPSCO representatives, that never happened. Mr. Valdez became rather involved with other matters and just wasn't available.

In March 2005 we heard that it was the intention of NIPSCO to totally remove virtually all of the trees in the first 50 foot of the Marktown Park along Pine Avenue and Broad Street. The reason was quite simple. The trees had grown into the 34,000 volt power lines and now pose a potential safety problem with the power lines.

It didn't take long for Paul Myers to arrange a series of meetings with the Parks Department and NIPSCO. What many may have forgotten is that in 1980, when Paul worked on the renovation plans for the Marktown Park, NIPSCO had agreed to move the high tension lines out of the Marktown Park all together. Unfortunately, they lost track of that promise. We will keep you posted on the results of future meetings on this and other important issues facing this community in your **Marktown Update**.

## Get Connected At The Cultural Connections Exhibit

The Northwest Indiana Quality of Life Council is holding an exhibit titled "**Cultural Connections - The Soul of the South Shore**" and yes, East Chicago and Marktown are once again a part of this most exciting event.

The exhibit opened on Monday, March 14th and runs through April 24th. The 6,500 square foot hall at the Indiana Welcome Center is jam packed with exhibits from various cultural groups from Lake County. Exhibitors include the East Chicago Branch of the NAACP, the Hammond Historical Society, and WestSide Theatre in Gary to name a but few.

Planning for the 2005 exhibit began in the fall of 2004 with regular committee meetings and input from

a number of sources. Those actually working on the East Chicago exhibit included Gloria Dosen who was in charge of the ethnic clothing display at the center of the exhibit hall, Paul Myers who designed the East Chicago and Marktown portions of the exhibit and Thomas Frank who produced a video presentation titled the Faces of East Chicago.

Marktown was once again permitted to participate in the East Chicago portion of the exhibit.

Given the fact that Marktown is a microcosm of life in East Chicago, contemporary photos hang along side historic photos.

The exhibit will be open to the public seven days a week through April 24th. If you get a chance, stop and see the show!



## Marktown Children Find Pen Pals: U.S. Military Members Serving In Iraq Write Home

When Judy Hicks and Ms. Maria began working with the children of Marktown to support the U.S. Military members serving in Iraq, I don't think they expected the response that they've gotten from those who serve. In January the first set of letters from the children of Marktown were sent overseas. On Monday, March 15th the first response came in from Iraq, and what a response it was!

It was addressed to Jackie & Rudy Alvarado of Marktown and was postmarked March 3, 2005 which just goes to show that it took a lot longer to get there than it did for the response to get back. The letter was from SFC John E. Spann of the 113th Engineers Battalion and this is what he had to say:

*"Hello Jackie & Rudy,*

*"My name is Sergeant John Spann. I am serving in the Army National Guard in Mosul, Iraq. My civilian job is working for the Post Office in the Harbor, East Chicago.*

*"I was the Mailman for Marktown two years ago and now I am serving my country as a combat engineer. We build schools, playgrounds and streets for the Iraqi people. The little boys and girls are*

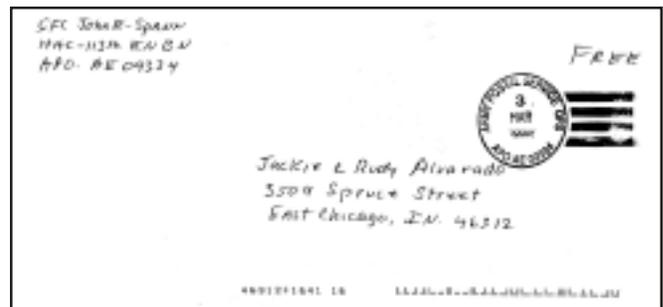
*nice like you and want a better way of life.*

*"The country is pretty with houses that, mostly look like apartment buildings. There are grassy hills tot he south of us. The city of Mosul has over 2,000,000 people in it.*

*"I have four children: 3 girls and 1 son. We live in Portage now but I love the city of East Chicago.*

*"Take care of yourselves and write when you can. Thank you for thinking of us who serve.*

*Love, Sergeant Spann*



The children in Marktown are also sending care packages to the U.S. Military members serving in Iraq. Care to help? See Judy at the Center! The postcard below was received just a few days later. We thought we would share it with you,



**OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM**  
OOH-RAH!



Dear Nisa Marie Hernandez,  
Thank you for your support and you card you wrote us. Your letter from the States helps us get over the home sickness. Thank you again. Nisa Marie Hernandez, You are a true "HERO!"

## Marktown Park And Our Industrial Heritage

Some people take our parks for granted, as if they were always there or that they will always be properly maintained, and quite frankly, that just isn't the case. Unfortunately for all of East Chicago this city has never had a reputation for properly maintaining its parks. Three good examples, besides the Marktown Parks, would be Washington Park, Callahan Park and what is now MacArthur Golf Course. They are but mere shadows of their former glory. Fortunately for us, as long as no one makes the mistake of selling off these precious lands we still have an opportunity to recreate what was there or make it anew for future generations of residents.

And so it is that we take just a page or two to discuss the original plans for the Marktown Park, and in doing so just maybe, we the residents of Marktown and all of East Chicago can begin to envision what our parks should become in the future years. Let's start with one of the earliest articles written about Marktown. It appeared in *THE IRON TRADE REVIEW* on March 17, 1917. The article was titled **MODEL CITY: Will be Started by Mark Mfg. Co., at East Chicago, Ind.**

"Chicago, Sept. 8 -- A Model city to accommodate 8000 employees is being laid out and construction started at East Chicago, Indiana, by the Mark Mfg. Co., which is erecting a large steel plant at Indiana Harbor. A site containing 190 acres has been bought and plans are being prepared by Howard Shaw, architect, to include the best features of similar housing efforts in other industrial communities. *A park, 280 X 350 feet will form the*

*central square with business structures surrounding it.* Street car lines from East Chicago and Whiting to Indiana Harbor will traverse the two principal streets. Work has been started on 200 modern houses of four to seven rooms, costing \$2500 to \$4000 each. They are of tile and of slow burning type.

*"Lots are 48 X 50 feet, giving garden space beside each house. Houses will be built at the lot line with a public lawn between the houses and the sidewalk and street.* Boarding houses and club houses for unmarried men will be provided. First class schools will be established. *A recreation building for general use will be built.* One end of the tract has been reserved for higher paid officials where more pretentious homes will be built.

"A sale plan has been devised by which employees may buy their homes over a period of five years. At the end of that time, if they remain in the employ of the company a generous rebate on the price will be given as a bonus. Space is provided for about 8000 persons on this tract. An initial investment of \$1,000,000 will be made in buildings."

Even during the initial stages of planning and development parks, parkways and gardens were a very important consideration. While this early article called for lot sized to be 48' X 50', those of us who have reviewed the original 1923 plat of the neighborhood know that the lot size was reduced to about 40' X 40'. What is important to note is that the original park, residential gardens and the street side gardens were retained in the plan.



*The 280 X 350 foot park noted in the article is not the park located behind the Old Community Center. It was a recessed park with a fountain and was located directly in front of the Market Square Building. It was removed in 1936 due to traffic problems. The recreation building that was mentioned is also not the building that we have been using all of these years.*



*In 1923 Mark Manufacturing was sold to the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Co. of Youngstown, Ohio. By 1926 the grid for the land surrounding the Mark Town Site had been drastically changed to reflect the standard north-south street pattern utilized in the majority of East Chicago and the Calumet Region. The future expansion of housing was never realized.*

But what about the other park along Pine Avenue and Broad Street? In a previous article in Marktown Update we noted that it was built at the insistence of Mr. Chester Williams (my grandfather) in the 1950's when the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company wanted to build what is now the USS East Chicago Tin Mill. But as the following article shows, plans for that park date back to as early as the 1920s. From the 1926 report titled "*Planning for the Future of East Chicago, Indiana: A General Survey of Its Social and Economic Problems*" which was prepared for the East Chicago Chamber of Commerce we find the following on page 171.

**"Campbell Park:** West of the Mark subdivision and east of a proposed street shown on the map, it is suggested that a small park be laid out for the benefit of the immediate neighborhood. This park would be as shown on the map and would contain an area of 16.5 acres. Its primary function would be to serve as a playground for children in the vicinity and as a recreation center of minor magnitude, especially adapted to the needs of the northwesterly portion of the community. It also would utilize in an excellent manner an otherwise irregular tract of land that otherwise might be subdivided in a shape detrimental to the community, a matter discussed at some length in a previous paragraph."

On the previous page you will find both the original architectural plat for Marktown and the parks designed by Howard Shaw and Jens Jensen and the revised plan from the 1926 report. What was nice about the 1917 plan is that it would have encompassed the lake and

the natural springs that fed it. In the 1940, that parcel of land was filled in and it was at that time that many of the homes in the 400 blocks of Prospect, Spring, Liberty and Park Streets began having trouble with water in their basement.

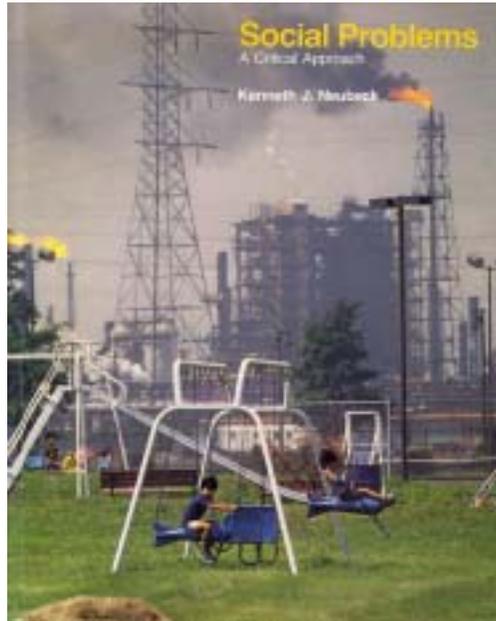
By far, one of the greatest quality of life issues is that of green space and park lands. From Marktown's very beginnings we have had parks planned. Over the years we have seen them expanded, improved, renovated and restored. Old fashioned play equipment of teeter-totters and monkey bars have been replaced with much more children friendly type of equipment.

This past year saw the development of the Marquette Greenway Plan, now being referred to as the Marquette Economic Development Plan, and with it came the proposal for nearly 1,000 additional acres of federally funded park lands in East Chicago alone.

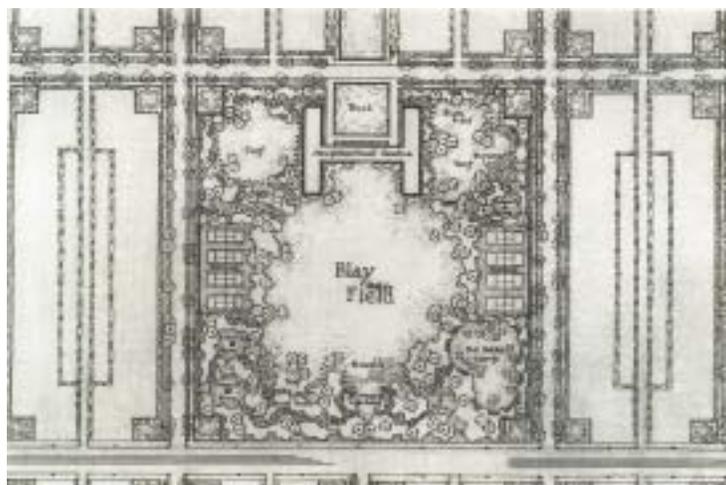
What will happen to the Marktown Parks, to a great extent, is up to us. We need to protect these precious lands as if they were our own yards and gardens, for in reality - they are.

Will additional trees be planted? Will NIPSCO be permitted to come in and remove thirty or more 25 year old trees? Will the Marktown Parks be converted into a regional sculpture park like they have in Skokie and other parts of the midwest and the country? The answer lies in our vision for this neighborhood and this city. I would encourage every resident of Marktown to be active in the future of our parks and of this community. Marktown deserves your support!

**Paul A. Myers**



*The photo on the cover of the 1984 college text titled **Social Problems: A Critical Approach** by Kenneth J. Neubeck is obviously of the Marktown Park during the 1980's Coastal Redevelopment Plan renovation. Fortunately no mention of Marktown was made in the book. The children shown are probably the Espinoza boys on the swings and the Snyder boys at the tennis courts.*



*Landscape architect Jen Jensen was responsible for the original design of the Center Park located just behind the Old Marktown Community Center. (Circa 1916)*

## Marktown Community Center Celebrates St. Patrick's Day, Easter And Spring - All In One!



The Marktown All Season Tree is decorated with bunnies, Easter bonnets, kites and shamrocks, all of which are the work of the children of Marktown.

Once again, Ms. Judy and Ms. Maria are working on new and innovative ideas to keep the minds of the children of this neighborhood engaged in positive activities. This month saw the Marktown All Season Tree decorated twice: first with the green of St. Patrick's Day and then with Easter bonnets, Easter bunnies and kites in preparation for Easter and spring.

While the children are focusing on Memorial Day, Ms. Judy and Ms. Maria are working on plans for bird watching, Arbor Day tree planting, gardening projects and a photo contest for the months ahead. What else will they have in store for the children of Marktown? Sign up your children, register as a volunteer and find out for yourself. It will be great fun for the entire family!



Santa won't be coming down the chimney for nine more months so Ms. Maria and Ms. Judy have decorated the fireplace for spring. Stop in and see all of their work!

## Preparations For Memorial Day In Marktown

**"We need everyone's help,"** said Judy Hicks. **"It isn't for me or even the children that come to the community center each day after school. It is for the entire community and most especially the young men and women from Marktown who serve in the Armed Forces of the United States."**

What is Judy talking about? The **Wall of Honor** that she puts together each year for Memorial Day in Marktown. Marktown residents have ALWAYS supported the servicemen and women from this neighborhood. Back in WWI and WWII we did it. After WWII the teenagers of Marktown even raised funds to purchase a plaque in memory of those who gave their lives during that war. The plaque is now on display at the Old Marktown Com-

munity Center.

**What is needed?** That's simple. Marktown residents who have family or friends currently serving in the U.S. Military are asked to please provide Judy and Ms. Maria with some or all of the following:

1. Name, rank and branch of service that they are in.
2. Current mailing address of the person in the military.
3. A photograph of the person,

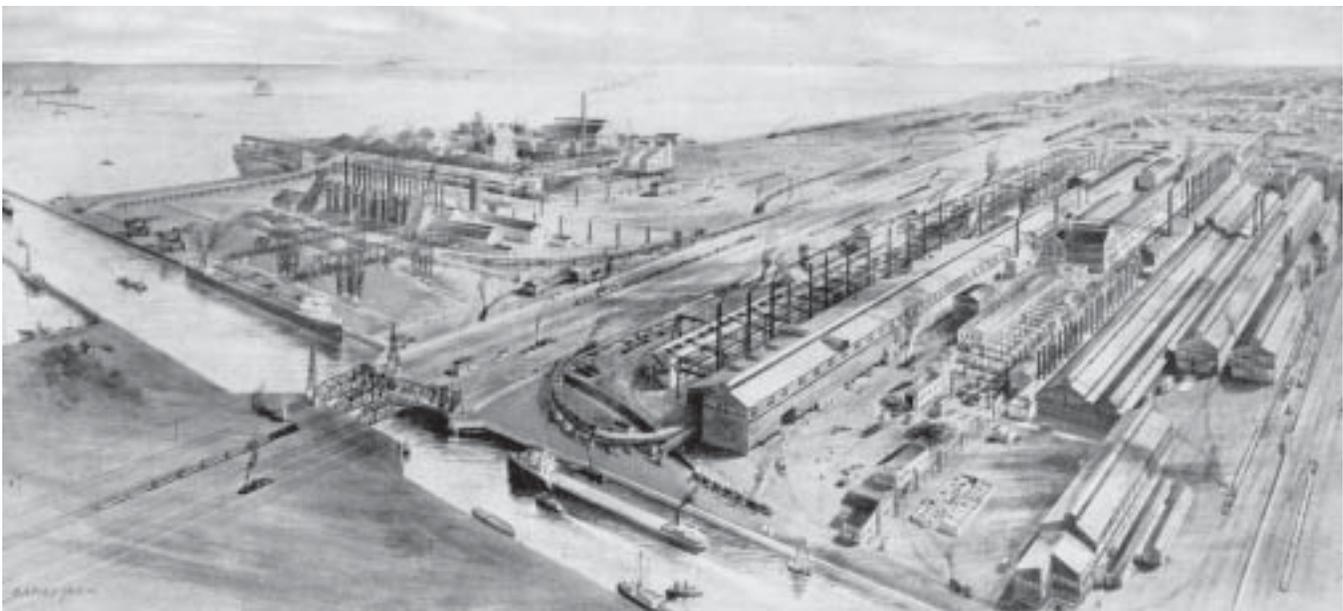
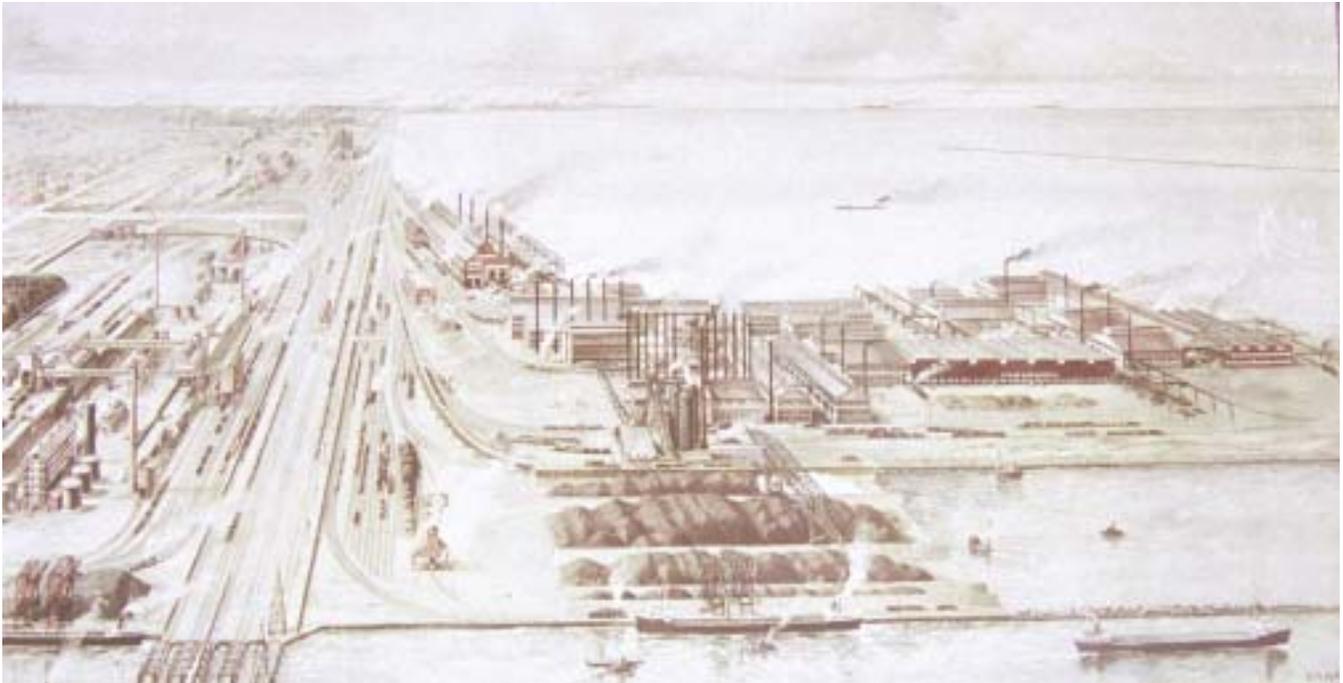


preferably in military uniform.

What will be done with the items and information? The photograph, name and rank will be posted on the Wall of Honor so all of the residents of Marktown (especially the children) will have someone to look up to. The children will also be encouraged to write to them and give them encouragement in these most trying of times. Care packages will be sent to as many of the young men and women as possible.

We've spoken to people who have served in Iraq and the one theme that is repeated time and time again is that **MAIL IS GOLD**. Encouragement from the children of this community to the young men and women works both ways. Sound good to you? Let's all pitch in and help on this project.

## Our Industrial Heritage Celebrated In Early Renderings



With the recent merger of Ispat Inland and ISG we thought it only appropriate to bring these two great companies together from a historic and artistic standpoint. At the turn of the last century photography had been around for over fifty years. The problem was, you just couldn't take photographs from aircraft at that time. What did most companies do to show the size of their facilities? They hired commercial artists that would illustrate their facility on a large board or canvas.

And so it was in 1920 at Mark Manufacturing Company (top illustration) and in 1913 for Inland Steel Company (bottom illustration).

It is amazing to see both sides of the Indiana Harbor Ship canal in early illustrations. At the bottom left of the top drawing you can clearly see the railroad trestles crossing the canal and heading west to Chicago. In the bottom illustration you can see the same trestles on the bottom left as the railroad tracks head east towards South Bend and Ohio.

Virtually none of what is illustrated in the way of physical plant facilities still stands today. It has all been upgraded, replaced or simply demolished. It should be noted that all of the land north of the railroad tracks was reclaimed from the lake by filling in the area with industrial fill and crushed steel slag.

## A View Into The Past - Heating Systems In Marktown



So often we take things for granted and forget about our past. In the winter months we merely set the thermostat and let the gas furnace kick in and keep us warm. But that wasn't always the case. Shown on the left is one of the original coal furnaces from a Marktown home. They were called gravity furnaces because they didn't even have a blower motor to force the hot air through the house. It rose to the first and second floor via gravity. Another name for this type of furnace was "spider" because of the long arms that reached across the basement ceiling to feed hot air to the duct work in the walls. When Marktown was first built, coal was the primary heating source and the furnace and hot water heater had to be stoked or fed with coal on a regular basis. If you wanted to take a bath, you went to the basement an hour or two earlier and fed coal into the hot water heater and then just waited until the water was hot enough. The coal furnaces were often converted to heating oil and blower motors were installed. Later, some of them were even converted to gas. If you still have one of the old "spider" furnaces like this, you might want to think about replacing it in the very near future as the new furnaces will pay for themselves in the energy savings that they will provide.

## Historic Marktown Golden Anniversary Movie Found

Forty years is a long time to some people, but not to National Register Historic Districts like Marktown. Nearly forty years ago (1967) Marktown celebrated its 50th Anniversary, and they did so in style. From past residents to the Governor of Indiana, our streets were filled with friends and neighbors in a way that has not been repeated since.

Planning for the event started several years earlier with BINGOs, raffles and car washes being held on a regular basis. When the event finally occurred it was covered in virtually all of the local newspapers. Even the Chicago press made it a point of finding tiny little Marktown. It was during this time that one of our residents, Dorothy Barnett, wrote to **Ripley's Believe it or Not** and convinced them to do the now famous illustration.

The 50th anniversary of Marktown was well

celebrated and as we have recently found, was well documented not only in the press, but by Marktown residents using their home movie cameras.

This past month I was privileged to view the home movies of Linda and Joe Gregorich who now reside in St. John. We had a great afternoon and time slipped by quickly. What appeared to be about two hours turned out to be 6 hours of reminiscing about life in Marktown those many years ago.

This past February, family members of John Sirovy donated a 7" reel of Super 8mm film of the Marktown Golden Jubilee to the MPS. We immediately made arrangements to have the film converted to video. The Mid-America Heritage Preservation Foundation, Inc., an Indiana nonprofit corporation, took care of the conversion for us. If you would like to view the tape stop in at the Community Center.



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***With TEAMWORK, Everything is Possible!***

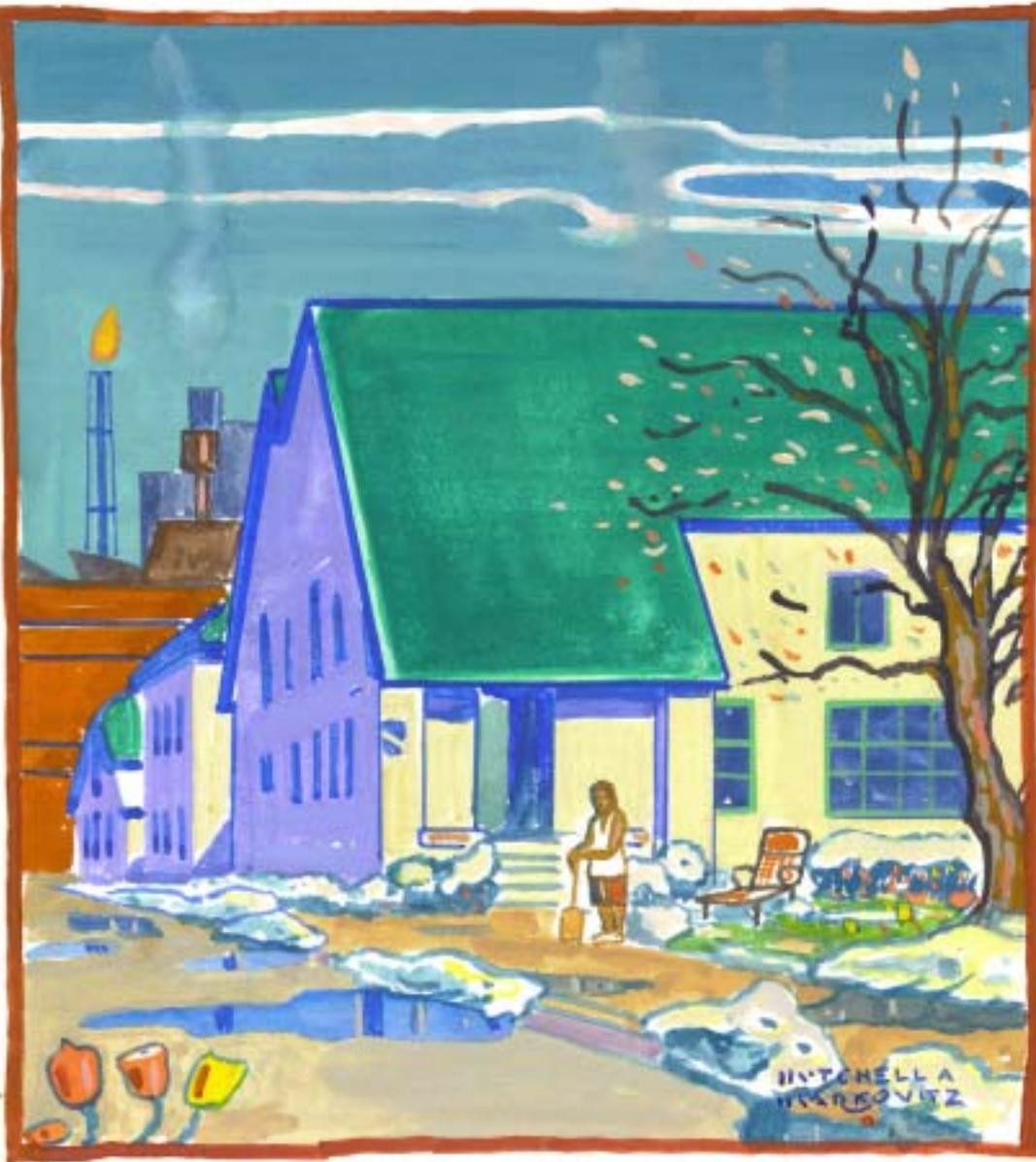


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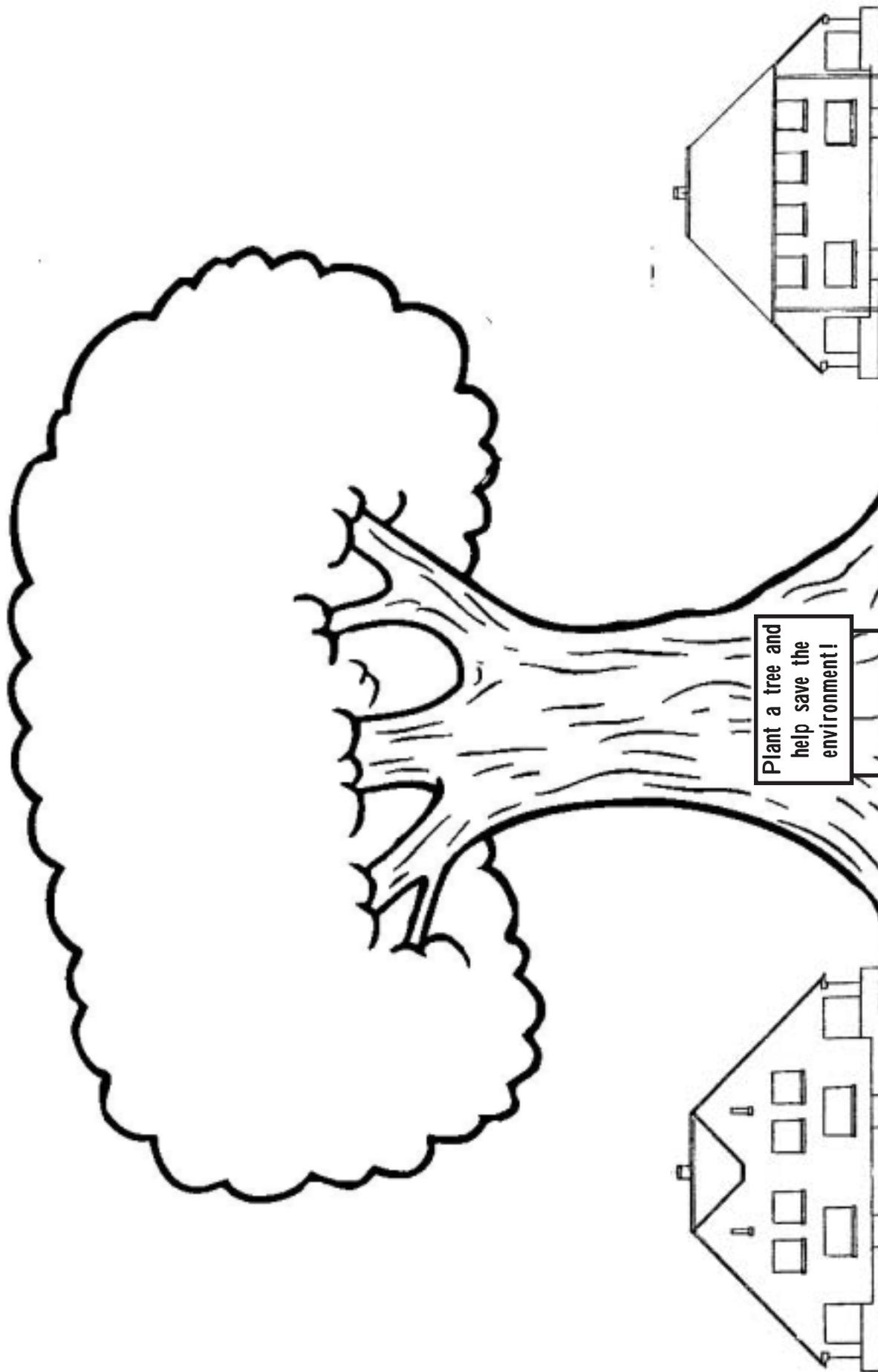
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LK SECTION I



SPRINGTIME  
in the Region ❁❁❁  
along the ShortShore Line



# Arbor DAY in MARKTOWN 2005