



# MARKTOWN UPDATE

A publication of the Marktown Preservation Society

August 2004

## With Teamwork All Things Are Possible!

Cooperation between the Marktown Historic District and the surrounding industry is not new by any means. After all, Marktown was born of steel and tempered in oil. If you know anything at all about the history of our community then you know that this most unique neighborhood was designed for steel workers with the adjacent oil refineries in mind.

Over the past eighty-seven years, all of the adjacent industry, but especially Mark Manufacturing Company and virtually all of their successor companies have been our partners and good neighbors. It started with the inception of our neighborhood as a model community to house the workers and families of the Mark Manufacturing Company.

Clayton Mark not only saw to it that quality homes were built, but he moved forward to actually build the two school buildings in our community. Did Mr. Mark stop there? Absolutely not. He also donated two busses so that the families in our neighborhood could shop in any of the various shopping districts in East Chicago, Whiting, Hammond and Gary. You might say that the concept of free public transportation in East Chicago began with the philanthropy of Clayton Mark.

During the great depressions the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company did their share also. While a number of Marktown residents were laid off due to the economic conditions Youngstown not only didn't evict them from the company housing, but they made it a point of working with the neighborhood to see that none went hungry.

Even after Marktown went public with the sales of the homes in the mid 1940s, the successor companies at Indiana Harbor Works have continued to support this most unique community.

In the early 1950s when the mill wanted to expand and build the No. 2 Tin Mill (now US Steel East Chicago Tin Division), Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company not only deeded the 13 acre park to the East Chicago Parks Department, but they actually built the park. While working on the sprinkler restoration project last year we found the original blueprints to prove it.

During the great snow storm of the 1960s that shut down virtually all of the Calumet Region, Youngstown came in and dug out all of Marktown and then moved onto assist in removing the snow from the streets at this end of the city.

In 1967 when Marktown celebrated our 50th anniversary and East Chicago their 75th, Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company virtually rebuilt our entire community center. And why? Because they are good neighbors.

The stories of corporate cooperation are endless. Joining in the process in recent years has been Safety Kleen, BP and others. And what has happened this past month? ISG Indiana Harbor decided to not only let those on Riley Road know that

they are approaching their facility, they also shared their sign with the Marktown Historic District.

A month or so ago when Ms Jolice Pojeta, Assistant to the General Manager called and asked for a copy of the Marktown Historic District logo and told us what she wanted it for we were thrilled. Now that the sign is up we are overwhelmed to have been included in this most outstanding project.

This is what we call teamwork! This is what life in Marktown and much of East Chicago has always been about. Our thanks goes to ISG Indiana Harbor Works for remembering their neighbors and friends in the Marktown Historic District.



*This striking new sign on the pedestrian cross walk on Riley Road is one of the greatest examples of industrial and neighborhood cooperation and teamwork. Note the Marktown Historic District logo on the upper left and the ISG Indiana Harbor logo of equal size on the upper right.*

# FLAGS FLY AGAIN IN MARKTOWN ON THE 4th OF JULY!

The 4th of July has once gone by with a bang and a boom. Patriotism comes in many forms. At times it's tying yellow or red, white and blue ribbons on trees. At times it's with fireworks, parades and floats; and at times by flying the flag of the United States of America. For the past fifteen to twenty years the residents of Prospect Street have joined together to do just that, fly flags in unison!

There is one flag however that is a bit different. It is one of the flags that usually flies at 405 Prospect Street, the home of Marktown Preservation Society founder Paul Myers. Just what is this strange flag? Is it a family coat of arms or some medieval organization? No, it's the official flag of the City of East Chicago.

When Paul was asked where it came from and why it is there, we got more information than we expected, for you see as resident historian, Paul knew the answers up front.

Said Paul *"The design of the flag came from the year 1967 when East Chicago was celebrating its Diamond Jubilee and Marktown its Golden Anniversary. There was a city wide competition for the design of the city flag and the city seal. This is the winning design from more than 35 years ago. The crosses represent the early Jesuit priests and explor-*

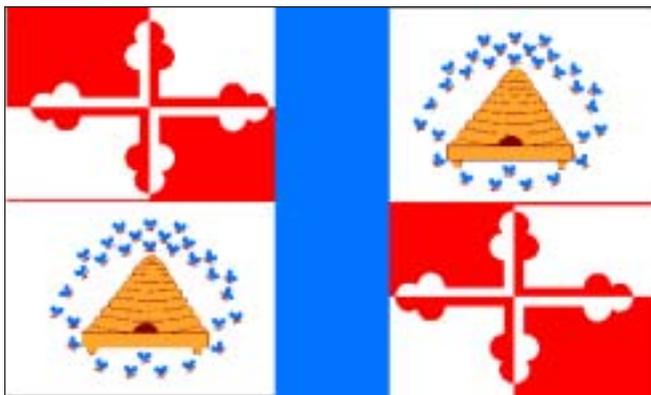
*ers that first came to this area. They also represent the strong religious beliefs of those that have made this great city their home for generation after generation. The beehives represent progress and the industrial nature of East Chicago. Like worker bees always tending to business. The blue stripe down the center represents both*

*both Lake Michigan and the Indiana Harbor Ship Canal."*

And just where did Paul get one of these rare flags you ask? To that he noted: *"Back in 1993 when this great city celebrated its 100th Anniversary I worked for the Public Information Department and handled the sales of many of the souvenirs that were sold to raise funds for the celebration. One of the things that we made available were the city flags and I bought one. It has flown on Prospect Street every summer ever since 1993."*

## INTERESTED IN A FLAG PROGRAM FOR YOUR STREET IN MARKTOWN?

The Marktown Preservation Society would be more than glad to expand the flag program to other streets in this most historic of neighborhoods. If you are interested in doing so on your street, just call Paul Myers at 397-2239. Remember - Together all things are possible: even flying flags in Marktown!



*Official flag of East Chicago, Indiana*

*The crosses represent the strong religious faith of those who have made this city their home. The beehives represent commerce, industry and jobs. The stripe down the center (blue) represents the Indiana Harbor Ship Canal and Lake Michigan.*



*Prospect Street on the 4th of July.*

*ALL of the residents on Prospect Street have worked together for years to show unity in their neighborhood. Flying flags is but one of the things they do on a regular basis. You will find them cleaning the streets, pulling weeds and in general - working together!*

***If it's a good idea... go ahead and do it.***

***It is much easier to apologize than it is to get permission***

## Indiana Welcome Center Hosts "Cultural Connections" ---

*an exhibit that included the Marktown Historic District and much, much more!*

If you missed the **Cultural Connections** exhibit at the **Indiana Welcome Center** in Hammond this past month then you missed a truly great event. More than twenty organizations, cities, towns and universities came together for an outstanding exhibit that celebrated the cultural diversity for which the Calumet Region is so well known.

Paul Myers, while serving as Director of Cultural Affairs and Historic Preservation for the city of East Chicago played a major part in not only the planning of the overall exhibit, but in the design and execution of both the East Chicago and Marktown Historic District portions of the exhibit.

He was assisted in his efforts by Gloria Dosen of the East Chicago Public Library's East Chicago Room. Ms Dosen supplied more than sixty photographs of past and present East Chicago residents which exemplified the cultural diversity of this great city. Included in the archival photos were the Pastrick family and Parks Board President Alex Sarkesian to name but two.

Also included in the East Chicago portion of the display was a wonderful display case with a number of rare books and artifacts from the East Chicago

Room at the library. For more than two years Paul had worked on getting the historic 1925 Municipal Court mural "Forgive Us Our Trespases" restored. When he realized that the mural would be ready for its return trip to East Chicago just before the opening of the exhibit he decided that the Indiana Welcome Center would be a great place to unveil this outstanding example of early 20th Century mural art.



*The 1935 East Chicago Municipal Court mural by East Chicago resident artist Ernest Kasas was one of the highlights of the exhibit. The mural recently underwent an extensive restoration supervised by Marktown's own Paul Myers when he served as Director of Cultural Affairs and Historic Presevation for East Chicago.*

The East Chicago portion of the exhibit included more than 60 photographs and 30 artifacts and the mural. The Marktown portion of the exhibit also included about 60 photographs and works of art.

While the EC Public Library provided historic brochures for exhibit visitors, the Marktown Preservation Society provided free walking tour maps, newsletters and the

newly printed Marktown historic booklets. Many of those that attended the exhibit noted that the displays by Whiting, East Chicago and Marktown were by far the most professionally presented displays at the center. If you missed this great exhibit you might be able to catch the Marktown portion on display at the Old Marktown Community Center early this fall. See you there!



*Jack Pranaitis, his wife Cheryl and children Jackson, Lillian, Autumn & Bradley made it a point of stopping in at the Indiana Welcome Center to see the exhibit. Jack's comment was "Outstanding! What a great way to celebrate Marktown, East Chicago and all of the rest of the Calumet Region."*



*More than sixty photographs and several pages of text were used to tell but one story of the Marktown Historic District. The exhibit was titled "Cultural Diversity" and where can you find better examples of everyone coming together to share in life than in the Marktown Historic District and East Chicago, Indiana.*

***A new motto for Marktown: Try to leave things better than you found them!***

# WHAT HISTORIC PRESERVATION IS TRULY ALL ABOUT... AND HOW IT WORKS!

by Paul A. Myers

Did you know that the concept of historic preservation has been around for decades? Did you know that it is an international and national movement that increases property values and improves the quality of life for all of the citizens in a city or town where a historic preservation commission exists? Did you know that the most progressive cities and towns have Historic Preservation Commissions? Did you know that cities in Indiana like Valparaiso, Bloomington, Elkhart, Fort Wayne, Jefferson, Kokomo, Lafayette, La Parte, Logansport, Madison, Indianapolis, South Bend and yes Hammond and Crown Point all have Historic Preservation Commissions? Did you know that there are more than forty Historic Preservations Commissions in Indiana alone? Did you realize that there is more misinformation on this subject being provided to you than you can imagine, and usually by people who know absolutely nothing about historic preservation and just don't want to give it a chance in East Chicago?

## Setting the Record Straight!

In 2003 when developers announced their plan to raze (bulldoze) the First National Bank building on the corner of Indianapolis Blvd. and Chicago Avenue, Mayor Robert A. Pastrick announced that he not only wanted the building preserved, but to facilitate that concept, he had called upon a local attorney to draft an historic review board ordinance. The initial draft of that ordinance came from the Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana and has already stood the test of the Indiana Supreme Court.

The Department of Planning and Business Development, under the direction of Kimberly Julkes felt that the passage of this ordinance was so important to the city of East Chicago that she placed it on her list of goals for that department for 2004. Earlier this year the Planning Commission unanimously approved the draft of the ordinance and forwarded it to the Common Council for consideration.

Just who will be members of the Commission? Your guess is as good as mine. But this is what the ordinance calls for. There will be more than three members but no more than nine members. All of the

members will be appointed by the Mayor and approved by the Common Council of East Chicago. All of the voting members of the Commission must be residents of East Chicago.

## Preservation & Property Values

Does official designation as a local historic district hurt or help property values in those districts? A study conducted by the Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana confirms what preservationists have long suspected: historic district regulations improve the quality of neighborhoods, in turn boosting property values. In a nutshell, the study found:

■ **Local historic district designation** has a positive effect on property values, despite the common misconception that regulation damages property values. According to the study, the value of properties in locally designated historic districts appreciated as much or more than properties in other parts of the

community, including new subdivisions and non-regulated historic neighborhoods.

■ **Designation as a local historic district** does not discourage reinvestment in existing buildings.

■ **Listing in the National Register of Historic Places**, which is largely honorary and not protective, does not boost a neighborhood's property values as much as being designated as a local historic district.

■ **Buyers** in historic districts usually have broader choices in building style, size, and features, and get more house, dollar for dollar, for their money.

■ **Local historic districts** contain racially and economically diverse populations that mirror their community's mix of people.

■ **Historic districts** do not push out old and poor residents; in fact, local historic districts typically provide affordable housing at many price points for both homeowners and renters.

■ **People who purchase homes in historic districts** aren't just passing through but tend to remain for an extended period, adding stability to an area. Local historic districts promote increased levels of home ownership.



*Do you remember this building? It was Fire Station No. 4 on Kennedy Avenue. Built in the Tudor Revival style in 1925 it was torn down to make way for an empty lot, something this city probably needs more of. Could it and should it have been saved? Absolutely. Were there other uses for this great old building? Absolutely!*

**We act as though comfort and luxury were the chief requirement of life,  
when all that we need to make us happy is something to be enthusiastic about.  
Let's get enthusiastic about historic preservation!**

■ **Historic district designation** can force better-quality new construction. Proposed new construction is reviewed to make sure it "fits in" with a neighborhood's character in terms of building materials, scale and quality of construction.

■ **Strong, consistently enforced of local ordinances** have a greater positive impact on property values than do weaker ordinances.

■ **Historic district commissions** approve more than 90% of the proposals they receive. Far from limiting what people can do with their properties, historic district commissions actually aid property owners by offering design assistance, advise on restoration techniques and produce a guidance in finding suitable contractors.

■ **Historic downtown districts** can still effectively serve its traditional, multifunctional role in a community.

### Local Historic District Designation

Local historic sites, neighborhoods, and downtowns can be designated only after an enabling ordinance creating a historic preservation commission is passed by the Common Council.

#### Local designations will:

- protect unique architectural and historical features of a property, neighborhood, or local downtown.

- create preservation guidelines based on the historic character of the designated area.

- offer the public an educational resource for information on rehabilitating historic buildings.

- provide for a local level of control of historic resources.

- offer a positive planning tool to allow historic architectural resources to be integrated into long-range plans for the community.

- improve the quality of life for designated neighborhoods through economic reinvestment and increased property values...

#### Local designations will not:

- require owners of historic property to automatically make repairs to their houses.

- require owners of historic property to undo past changes.

- create funds for preserving historic properties.

- increase property taxes.

- be as restrictive as most new subdivision deed restrictions (which are also concerned with the protection of investments and aesthetics).

### Steps in Creating a Local Historic District

Once a community has passed a local enabling ordinance creating a Historic Preservation Commission or Review Board, a commission is authorized to designate local historic districts through a separate ordinance passed by the Common Council. This can be as small as a single building, site, or structure but most often consists of a collection of buildings. Ongoing public education would occur under each step of the process. The following steps are generally recommended:

1. Proposed building or area identified as potential district.

2. Commission member and staff meet with property owners of proposed historic districts or sites

3. Working with the property owners, the commission holds a series of informational meeting designed to answer question about the proposed district or designation.

4. Commission members and staff meet with property owners to draft preservation guidelines which are specific to the proposed historic district. The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are often used as a basis for the guidelines.

5. Commission holds public hearing to review historic district designation

and hears comments from the public.

6. With a recommendation of the Commission, the historic designation ordinance is referred to the Common Council, which holds a separate public hearing. The Common Council may adopt an ordinance designating a historic district as it is recommended, they may amend the ordinance, or they may reject it entirely.

You see, there's nothing to fear in Historic Preservation, but there is everything to gain if it is approved and moves forward. Together, all things are possible!

If you would like more information on historic preservation we suggest you contact the Calumet Regional Office of Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana. Call 938-2200 and ask for Erica Taylor.

**Let's start and think "RESTORATION" and not "DEVISTATION."**



*When will it end? If East Chicago had an historic preservation ordinance there would be no question that the First National Bank Building could have not only been saved, but more importantly preserved for the present and restored for future generations to enjoy. Is there a use for the building? Absolutely! It could be used as a Walgreens and a bank with offices on the second floor made handicap accessible. Shouldn't we consider saving this East Chicago Landmark?*

# HISTORIC BOOKCASE FINDS NEW HOME IN MARKTOWN

*by Paul A. Myers*

A number of years ago I was asked to consult on the exterior restoration of Howard Van Doren Shaw's 1906 Mentor Building in Chicago. The building's exterior was to be fully restored while the interior floors were being rehabbed and divided into condo units. It was by all means going to be an exciting project. One thing certain that I knew that the developers didn't know was that Howard Shaw, the architect of the Marktown Historic District made the top floor of this most unique Chicago Style building his office for more than a decade.

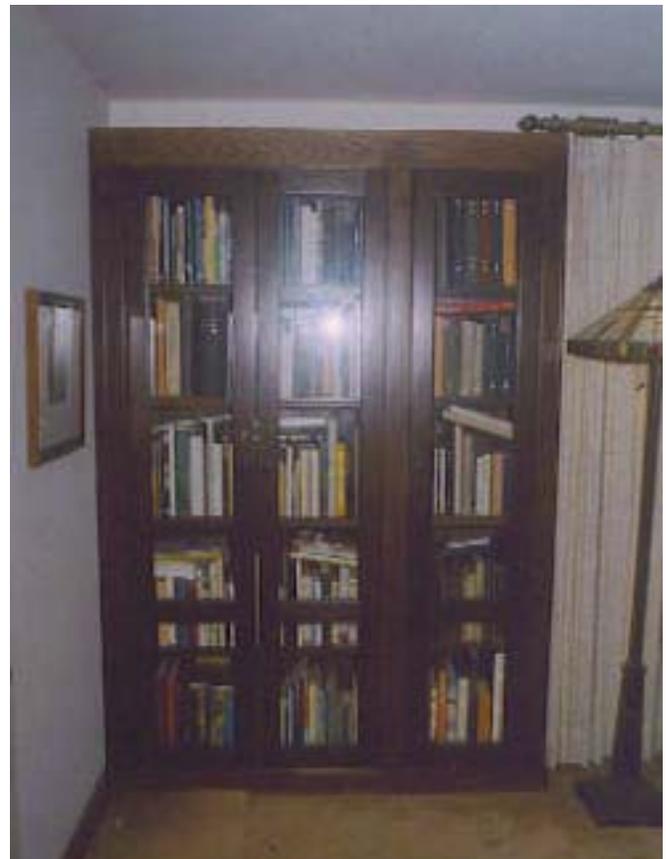
The top floor was above the elevator head and it was a walk up one flight from the 16th to the 17th floor. Most of the floor was open and undivided, lit primarily by massive skylights (most unique for the period) and there were only four other windows at eye level on the rest of the floor.

Mr. Shaw had a private office just inside of the entrance to the space. It was about the size of a Marktown living room (12' X 18") but had a 10' decorated plaster ceiling. The floor was done in a black and white sectioned terrazzo while the walls were finished in a rich quarter sawn oak panelling. One end of the office held a set of massive bookcases that were approximately 2 foot deep. They were de-

signed specifically to hold sets of architectural plans and blueprints. The oak panelling met the ceiling in the form of a massive oak cornice with dental ornamentation. Over the years all of the paneling and book cases had been painted: first white, and then a terrible mint green.

While the exterior restoration was going on I gained permission from the owners of the building to remove all of the panelling and book cases from Mr. Shaw's offices. While much of it would fit in the elevator, six trips had to be made carrying the dental cornices to the first floor for loading into my station wagon. It was a lot more work than I had expected, but worth every minute of it.

This past year, Rafael Bejar of Marktown totally restored three sections of the bookcase unit and installed them in my Marktown living room. The top shelf contains books on Marktown while the rest of the book case if filled with my architectural and Japanese book collections. Once the dental cornice is installed it will once again be a floor to ceiling book case. Another piece of Mr. Shaw's architectural legacy is now preserved in the Marktown Historic District. We thank Mr. Bejar for his outstanding craftsmanship and dedication to this most unique project.



***The Marktown Preservation Society is preserving the past for future generations of Marktown, East Chicago, Indiana and the nation!***

## MARKTOWN CLEANUP CONTINUES ON A WEEKLY BASIS

We keep talking about it but some people just don't understand it. It's called working together, both within and without this neighborhood. The residents of 501 Liberty Street were in the process of cleaning up the yard and cleaning out some junk from the house. While they had started to put the debris in the street so the city could pick it up, someone from our neighborhood told them they had to put it in their yard. Well, that's wrong. If you want the city to pick it up it HAS TO BE OFF OF YOUR PROPERTY. I took the time to show them where to put it and suggested that they keep as much of it out of the street as possible.

Later that weekend I noted that they had followed my advice. Along with their debris several of their neigh-



bors pitched in and added some of their own debris to the pile. Late that Sunday evening I took the time to drive through Marktown and write down seven or eight locations of rubbish that needed to be picked up by the Street Department. Personally I always get Sanitary Solids and the Street Department confused, but I am sure it was Andy Callas of the Street Department that I sent the fax to Sunday evening.

What happened next is exactly what we expect to happen. The street department sent out the crews and the necessary equipment and the next thing we knew the rubbish was gone and the mess was cleaned up. If you need a hand in getting things picked up, just give me a call at 397-2239. If I am not there leave a message for Paul!

## BASEBALL PARKING LOT GETS THROWN A CURVE BALL

It was with pleasure that we reported last month that US Steel would be donating a portion of their parking lot on 129th Street to the East Chicago Parks Department for use at the softball field. It appears that there are two minor snags in the donation.

The first is that US Steel only leased the land from LTV Steel (now defunct). ISG Indiana Harbor Works, Inc. now holds the actual ownership of the land in question. While US Steel will be preparing the plat of survey and the legal paperwork it will still have to be approved by ISG's management. Having spoken to them in the past I can not imagine this being a problem with ISG Indiana Harbor Works.

The second problem is that the East Chicago Parks Board will have to accept that donation and with it the responsibility for the maintenance of this small parcel of land.

One question that was raised in reference to the project is that of environmental issues. Is the land that is to be donated contaminated and if so, will it require a costly clean up? If there is any degree of contamination on this small parcel of land, it is obviously the exact degree of contamination of the adjacent baseball field and park. The important thing to take into consideration is that we have always had the use of this particular section of the parking lot for use by those playing softball in the Marktown Park.

At the present time those playing softball in the city sponsored league either have to park in Marktown or are forced to illegally park across the street in the ISG lot. The best solution in this case is to have ISG Indiana Harbor and US Steel donate the land to the East Chicago Parks Department. It makes good sense to us. What do you think?



***Let's Work Together To Preserve Marktown's Unique History  
And Architecture For Future Generations***

## Images From The Past: Marktown Up Close



Since the Cultural Connections exhibit is now closed we thought we would share three more of Tracy Albano's classic images with you. While the original prints were in color, we are still pleased to present these prints in classic black and white. We thank Ms Albano for permission to use these great photographs in the Marktown portion of the exhibit.

**Top left: A clean sweep.** A young child helps dad clean up on Lilac Street.

**Bottom left: Tired of the new playground equipment?** Leave it to a Marktown youth to find an inventive use for a used tire.

**Bottom right: First day of summer or first day of school?** A young David Rodriguez laces up a new pair of shoes while his younger brother Ryan dons a pair of socks, presumably to be followed immediately thereafter with his new pair of shoes.



## New Marktown Community Center Construction Update

# ***NOT HAPPENING!***



Marktown Update is a monthly publication of the Marktown Preservation Society which is dedicated to the restoration and preservation of the Marktown Historic District.

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

