



# MARKTOWN UPDATE

A publication of the Marktown Preservation Society

January 2007

## MARKTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT CELEBRATES 90TH ANNIVERSARY



*Marktown began with the building of a modern manufacturing facility on the shore of Lake Michigan in 1913.*

**Born of steel and tempered in oil....** In Ripley's Believe It Or Not for being the only community in North America **where the cars park on the sidewalk and people walk in the Street.** And yes, even listed as the 8th Wonder of the World, tiny Marktown has earned its place in history, but more importantly, can and should be a viable neighborhood for generations to come.

While there are always those who say "Bomb the place! Just tear it down," those comments are not coming from those who live here or those who understand our historic past and our most probable and highly possible future.

Why has Marktown endured all of these ninety years? For the answer to this we must go back and look at when, why and how the Mark Town Site came to be. It began by defining the need for QUALITY worker housing at the beginning of the last century. Between 1913 and 1915 industry across the nation suffered a 400-1100% of employee turnover per year. That's right: every month to 3 months factory workers quit their jobs and looked for employment else-

where because of a lack of quality housing made available to them. The problem was defined on a national level as well as the solutions to that problem. To make a long story short, the solution was quality, well built neighborhoods.

At about the same time that the national survey was being made, Clayton Mark purchased 190 acres of prime lake front property in what was then known as the North Harbor sector of East Chicago, Indiana. His intentions were two fold: 1) build a steel mill that could supply his materials hungry pipe mills with much needed cold rolled steel, and 2) provide quality housing for his work force which was initially projected to exceed 8,000 workers.

Mr. Mark hired noted Chicago Architect Howard

Van Doren Shaw to design not just housing, but more importantly, a community, a neighborhood of quality housing that would give his employees a reason for staying in what was then a frontier town a good hours train ride from Chicago.

What would be included in this new concept of quality housing?

Well, let's just say that

*Continued on next page* ←



*With the manufacturing of steel came a need for a skilled work force to man the mighty mills.*



*And with that work force came the need for modern, quality housing for their workers and families!*

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*A group of grade school children pose for their annual class photo on the steps of the Mark School Building.*

nearly every item that was needed then is taken for granted today. In reviewing reports that detailed worker housing conditions of the late 1800s and early 1900s nearly everything that we take for granted today was missing back then.

Over the past thirty years a great deal of very positive things have happened in Marktown. It's been saved from the wrecker's ball on two occasions, elevated to the status of a national historic district, had the 13 acres of park totally renovated, had the sewer pump house totally rebuilt, and yes, we've had all of the streets and sidewalks re-engineered and replaced. And all of these projects have taken place without a direct cost to the homeowner.

We know that Marktown was well built and had a great architect design it. But it isn't all about architecture, durability or even industrial history. It is about people. Regular people from around the world who have made Marktown their home and the home of their family. It has been the home for generations of some families while others just come, stay a few years and move on.

We have had more civic organizations in Marktown than I want to think of. We know about the Mark PTA in the early years. And during WWII we had the bandage rollers and ladies that supported the troops much like we did most recently. We had a Marktown Civic Club. Oops, we have one of those again.

We have had a Marktown Men's Club, a Women's Club (several of them over the years) and even a teenager club. And in most cases they all worked together for the common cause of making Marktown a better place to live and to raise our families. You see, it has never been about the individual, but more importantly about the neighborhood.

So, where do we go from here? The firm of BauerLatoza Studio in Chicago is wrapping up the Marktown Revitalization Plan and will be making a presentation to the Marktown residents in the very near future. And with that plan, the hopes and aspirations that every home in Marktown be brought up to code and occupied once again rests. We also hope that the Mark Hotel and the Market Square Building will be renovated for public and commercial use.

But what about a celebration? While no real plans have been made to date, at the meeting in December

hosted by Precinct Committeeman Javier Madrigal, it was suggested that a Marktown Homecoming Picnic be held at some point this summer or fall. Nancy (Deiotte) Fink and Paul Myers both volunteered to work on the project and a committee will probably be appointed at their next meeting.

Marktown has always been a great place to live and to raise a family.

With the participation of all of the residents and the cooperation of the various civic groups, our future should be a bright one for generations to come.



*Young ladies from Marktown gather for a birthday photo on the streets of Marktown. Recognize anyone?*



*Ladies from Marktown gathered regularly to roll bandages for the war effort and the American Cancer Soc.*

# Our Historic Past Preserved In The Press

*The Iron Trade Review*

March 17, 1917

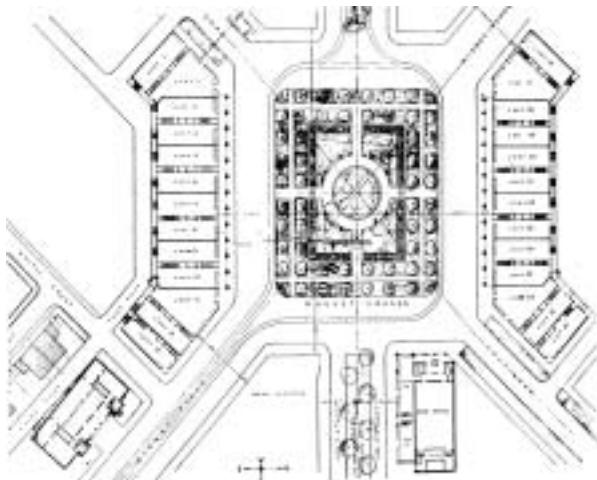
## Model City

**Will be started by mark Mfg. Co.,  
at East Chicago, Indiana**

Chicago - A model city to accommodate 8000 employees is being laid out and constructed 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 tile and of the 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 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 800 persons on this tract. An initial investment of \$1,000,000 will be made in buildings.



**Marktown Market Square as originally designed.  
The illustration was not a part of the original article.**

*The Hammond Times*

February 20, 1918

## Finest Workmen's Homes for North Harbor

**100 of the First Batch Ready for  
Mark Steel Workers May First**

North Harbor, the new community being built by the Mark Manufacturing Company between Indiana Harbor and Whiting, now shows 119 houses well under construction, of which 96 are under roof. It is expected that the first 100 will be ready for occupancy on May 1.

### Rushing Tube Works

These homes are for the officials and employees of the giant tube works being built by the Mark Company. This steel plant, now being built, will have blast furnaces, coke ovens, open hearth furnaces, and necessary pipe and tube mills. Two of the tube mills have been running since fall and work is well under way in the blast furnace, open hearth furnace and coke oven departments.

It is planned to have eight blast furnaces in all. The company now uses the products of its two blast furnaces and Bessemer Steel Works at South Chicago for its Indiana Harbor Plant.

### Finest in Region

Walter J. Riley, President of the First Calumet Trust and Savings Banks is property agent for the Mark Company. The houses will be rented or sold on easy terms to the Mark Steel workers like is done by the steel trust in Gary. Only the Mark Steel workers will live in dwellings far more superior, clearly more substantial in their construction, and more modern in their design than those built in Gary eleven or twelve years ago. Prices will be moderate.

While the new homes will not take care of the several thousand worker to be employed by the Mark Tube Works, yet they will help to relieve the housing situation and it is not at all unlikely that more will be built.



**Marktown during construction in 1918.  
The photo was not a part of the original article.**

# Working Together For A Better Marktown: a history lesson

With our 90th anniversary as a NEIGHBORHOOD here, it's not only important to take a look back at our industrial and architectural history, but equally as important we need to take a look at our social history as well. Our ability to interact and work together is an important aspect of Marktown and yes, there are lessons that can and should be learned from our past.

When the Mark Town Site was first built, believe it or not we were totally isolated from the rest of the Calumet Region. Very few workers residing in Marktown owned automobiles. How did they and their families get about the city? While the trolley lines made it down Riley and Dickey Roads and would take residents to Whiting, Indiana Harbor and East Chicago, at the request of the residents Clayton Mark purchased two buses for the exclusive use of the residents of Marktown.

When the plans for the Mark Town Site were laid out there were many amenities planned for the community. After WWI those plans were put on permanent hold. One of the items that was greatly needed was a community center: a place to meet and gather as a neighborhood. While two 2-room school buildings had been built in 1920, at the request of the residents, one of them was converted to a community center.

During times of layoff at the mill, it is well documented that the residents of Marktown worked together to make sure that none went hungry or without. For those families that the worker had been laid off, at least one warm meal was provided free of charge by their friends and neighbors. Those meals were served at the community center.

Once the schools were opened in 1920, a PTA was

formed in order to assist in the direction of the education of the children of Marktown. In the 1930s it was that PTA that worked with company and city officials to make sure that a library was opened behind the barber shop at the Market Square Building.

During WWII more than 150 young men and women from Mark enlisted in the military to defend the freedoms and liberty that we had come to enjoy. And when seven of those young men and women gave their lives in defense of those liberties, the Mark Teenage Club responded by raising funds for a bronze plaque to commemorate their loss.



In the 1950s the residents of Marktown worked together to prevent our neighborhood from being zoned industrial and eventually torn down. At the same time they also worked with city officials and YS&T to have the company they worked for build a 13 acre park complete with basketball courts, play equipment and a sprinkler system.

In the mid 1960s the residents of Marktown worked together to plan their 50th anniversary. In doing so they also worked with Youngstown Sheet & Tube Company to remodel the Marktown Community Center and pave the Marktown Streets with modern blacktop.

In the 1970s the residents of Marktown worked with city officials to place our neighborhood on the National Register of Historic Places and in doing so, forced the U.S. Government to move Cline Avenue to its current location as opposed to bringing it down Dickey Road which would have required Marktown to be razed.

In the 1980s the residents of Marktown worked together to plan the redevelopment of the Marktown Parks.

In that same decade the residents also worked together to resolve a petroleum problem in our sanitary sewers. That same decade found residents working together to see to it that the unsightly 55 gallon drums that were being provided as garbage cans by the city were outlawed in this neighborhood once and for all.

In 1989 the Marktown Preservation Society worked with ALL of the Marktown residents in the design of the streets, sidewalks and historic lighting that we see in our neighborhood today.

At the millennium, the year 2000, New Year's Eve found all of Marktown working together to make sure that the only sound heard on the streets at midnight was the singing of Auld Lang Syne.

In 2004 we all worked with the MPS in the appeal of the property assessments that would have raised our taxes to a rate that would have been out of reach for many of our neighbors. Our appeal was successful.

These are but a few of the instances in which the residents of Marktown have worked together over the past 90 years to make this a better community for all. The key word in all of these cases is TOGETHER, for united as a neighborhood there isn't anything we cannot do for this neighborhood.

## Defining The Original Marktown Doors



36" - 6 light door used on the six room duplex and the Marktown Quads.



36" - 4 light door used on the seven and four room duplex homes.



36" - 9 light door used on the six room cottages (along Park Street).



33" - 6 light door used as the rear door on all of the Marktown homes.



Classic Arts & Crafts styled storm doors graced all Marktown homes.

Ever try to figure out the styles of the original Marktown doors? Believe it or not they are not all the same, or are they? All of the back doors were 33" - 6 light (window) doors.

A 36" - 6 light door was used on the 6 room duplex, and the center and end units of the Marktown Quad.

A 36" - 4 light door was used on the four and seven room duplexes.

The six room single cottages, like those along Park Street had a 36" - 9 light door.

The front and back storm doors were of the same "Arts & Crafts" design, but of different widths to fit the door jamb.

Following the change in street numbers and names in 1923, brass plates were used on each door to denote the street address.



Brass plates were used to provide house numbers on each home.

# EPA HOLDS IMPORTANT MEETING IN E.C.

Thursday, December 14th found a full house at the smaller of the two auditoriums at East Chicago Central High School for a special presentation by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), Region 5. In looking at those in attendance it was obvious that there were nearly as many governmental staff personnel present as residents and concerned citizens.

As a part of the US Army Corps of Engineer's (USACE) Environmental Impact Statement, USEPA conducted a Human Health Risk Assessment on potential emissions from the Confined Disposal Facility (CDF) in 1995.

At the community's request, USEPA agreed to provide a more detailed analysis. The analysis goes beyond what is required for the project. New information and new technology make the supplement a good idea. The USEPA evaluated: 1) additional exposures including skin contact and ingestion, 2) additional contaminants, 3) more detailed site-specific information, and 4) additional groups of people that may be exposed.

The study examined

the effects of 53 different chemicals of concern. In order to determine how the chemicals might move or be deposited, five years of local weather information was used to account for wind, storms and temperatures. Indiana sets limits on the amounts of vapors and dust the disposal facility can release each year. To be conservative in estimating health risks,

the study assumed the CDF would release the maximum amount of emissions allowed each year.

However, the Indiana Department of Environmental Management's (IDEM) permit requires the CDF to operate below that limit. The study also took into account the operating schedule that will be followed by the corps once the dredging begins. Dredging is expected to occur three months out of each year for 30 years.

It is important to note that the estimated risks from the CDF emissions were found to be within EPA's and IDEM's safety levels.

The entire supplemental risk assessment as well as a fact sheet are available online at: [epa.gov/region5/sites/indianaharbor](http://epa.gov/region5/sites/indianaharbor).



*Above: East Chicago residents and governmental staff members met at Central High School for the recently released Supplemental Risk Assessment.*

*Below: EPA staff members Yolanda Bouchee, Community Involvement Coordinator (left) and Laura Lodisio, Northwest Indiana Project Coordinator (right) field questions from members of the public who were present.*



## Renovation Work Begins On Marktown Center

The comment "Excuse Our Dust!" was heard at the Old Marktown Community Center this past month as workers for Greentree Builders LLC began the much awaited interior renovation of the building. While their initial intent was to keep the center open during construction, that changed around January 1st when the decision was made to close the center and complete the work in just two more weeks.

What is being done you ask? To begin: a new ceiling and floor, washroom renovations, enlarged storage closets, an expanded kitchen with additional storage, not to mention the replacement of the old panelling with drywall. Hopefully the handicap ramp will be brought up to code and the parking lot paved during this project and long before the May elections.



*Day one of the renovation process!*

# From the Workshop of the Nation to the Most Liveable City in the U.S. of A.

The founding fathers of East Chicago, those who lead this great city down the paths of industrial expansion of the early part of the 20th Century would not recognize East Chicago today. Gone are the smoke stacks and furnaces that forged steel here for nearly 100 years.

The Indiana Harbor Ship Canal which was carved out of virgin dune and swale in the late 1800s as a tool for commerce is once again a major factor in the economic expansion and redevelopment of this city. Gone are the millions of cubic yards of industrial pollution which once lined the bottom of the canal. Ore boats have been replaced with pleasure craft and wave runners. Giant cranes that unloaded coal, limestone and iron ore have given way to customized devices that gently place power craft and sail boats into what is now one of the busiest recreational waterways in the nation.

How did all of this come about in just twenty years? VISION! A new vision for East Chicago was forged in the minds of the residents in 2005 when after one hundred years of industrialization, quality of life issues were at last addressed. Known as the Workshop of America just 100 years ago, East Chicago was recently named the Most Liveable City in the U.S. of A.

What had been industrial wastelands left behind by various industries has since been remediated and now serve a much greater purpose for all. Mixed use housing, parks, retail and recreation facilities abound on the 5,000 acres of what had been Mittal

Steel. Where the war furnaces of Inland Steel once stood, now stands the nation's leading Industrial Heritage Museum. Over 2,000,000 visitors a year learn how steel was once made in the Calumet Region.

Tourism is not restricted to museum campus. The Roxanna subdivision, built just after World War II has not only been placed on the National Register of Historic Places, but is also home to the Roxanna Heritage Center. Visitors can tour three vintage post-WWII homes which have been restored to teach visitors that housing is a viable reusable commodity.

After touring Roxanna visitors are whisked away to the Historic Church tour which features ten of the more than thirty historically significant churches in East Chicago.

Their last stop for the day is of course, the Marktown Historic District. Once surrounded by steel, this quaint neighborhood is now surrounded by more than 1,000 acres of federal park lands.

The Carnegie Center for the Performing Arts located in Indiana Harbor has expanded its vision to include public sculpture throughout East Chicago and now the Calumet Region. More than five hundred works of major public sculpture grace not only the parks in East Chicago and northern Lake County, but all of the three county area. Thousands of visitors to Northwest Indiana tour the region each weekend because of the visionary concepts brought forward in the first decade of this century.

While big steel had been the number one employer for the first half of the 20th Century, the health

care industry has gained that position. St. Catherine Hospital which was first opened in 1928 has moved its medical facilities to a new 40 acre campus on Chicago Avenue. The original structure is now home to the Mitchell Daniels School of Medicine.

Located along the previously non-navigational portion of the Indiana Harbor Ship Canal is the recently completed Environmental Technology Center which is the result of the cooperation of Purdue University, Indiana University and Ivy Tech Community College. The center has become both an education institution and a business incubator facility, both with the same goal in mind: a cleaner environment for generations to come.

And as for the city government itself, East Chicago was the original home of the South Shore Railroad. It was also the first city in Indiana to provide free bus service to its residents. Keeping with the concepts of environment first, East Chicago became the first city in the nation to use all hydrogen fuel technology vehicles.

What's next for East Chicago? Come and find out for yourself. Remember, Chicago is just minutes away from East Chicago, Indiana.



*NOTE: This article/advertisement first appeared in the 100th Anniversary of The Times in 2006. It is the third part of a three part series of articles, each of which represents a decade in East Chicago's past. This particular article represents a vision for East Chicago twenty years from now. All three articles were written by Marktownner Paul A. Myers. They were sponsored by the City of East Chicago, George Pabey, Mayor.*

# Christmas Celebrated In Marktown



Christmas decorating began early once again as the children from the Marktown Historic District participated in the annual tree decorating contest at the Washington Park Greenhouse. This year's theme for the Marktown tree was Kwansa.



**Above:** Once again our friends and neighbors at 401 Lilac Street greeted residents and visitors alike with their overwhelming Christmas display. The Camacho Family makes it a point of decorating for Halloween, Thanksgiving and yes, Christmas.

**Below:** Nothing says Christmas in Marktown like the annual decorating of the Marktown Community Center. The event was led once again by Kim Rodriguez who spent countless hours hanging decorations and paying attention to those little details. It should be noted that virtually all of the decorations were either hand made or donated by Marktown residents.

We take this opportunity to express our thanks and appreciation to everyone who has assisted at the Marktown Community Center this past year, and especially to Judy Hicks for all that she has done for the children of Marktown these past years.



**Errata:** On page seven of the December 2006 issue of Marktown Update we managed to print an article without the title. This was not the fault of the printers or our volunteer staff. When I downloaded the edition to CD for the printers, the title was not included and I did not notice it. It should have read: **East Chicago Retools For Peacetime Expansion.** Respectfully, Paul A. Myers, Editor - Marktown Update

**Marktown Update** is published each month by the **Marktown Preservation Society, Inc. (MPS)** from their office at the residence of Paul A. Myers. It distributed free of charge to all of the residents of Marktown. It is also distributed to more than 400 non residents via the U.S. Mail. An index to all of the past issues, as well as PDF electronic copies of each issue are available at the official

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