



MARKTOWN UPDATE

A publication of the Marktown Preservation Society

March 2003

Parks and Recreation Officials Meet With Marktown Residents

The East Chicago Parks and Recreation Department held the first of what is planned to be an ongoing series of community meetings designed to increase community participation and involvement. Representing the Recreation Division were Lilia Ramos, Director of Recreation, Pshion Patterson, Recreation Coordinator and Gildardo Peral (or Mr. P as he prefers to be called) as the official Park and Recreation Department English-Spanish Translator. Marktown Recreation employees Judy Hicks and Judy Grindy were also present along with a number of residents and children from the community.

While a better turn out was expected, those present were impressed with the presentation and the information provided. The Parks and Recreation Department had recently mailed out their Winter and Spring catalogue of events. If you did not receive one in your mail, extra copies are available at the Community Center.



The most unique aspect of the meeting was the fact that the Parks and Rec. Department WANTS AND NEEDS OUR INVOLVEMENT in planning for the recreation programs for the children of our community and in developing new ideas for adult and youth programs. It was noted several times that the residents of Marktown do not have all of the programs that the other centers have. Ms Ramos was quick to point out that all of the programs are available to everyone in East Chicago and that a 15 passenger mini van is now available to transport children to and from other centers and programs.

As we noted, this was the first of a series of ongoing meetings to be held here in Marktown. Keep an eye out for the next notice that will announce the future meeting dates and times. I am sure that Mr. P will be there to translate to Spanish if needed. This is a great opportunity to get involved in what is happening your neighborhood!

Work Begins on the New Marktown Community Center

While contracts have not been signed and we have not had an official ground breaking ceremony, contractors were busy in February taking soil samples so that ground density can be determined. Without this most important process the architects and engineers would not be able to properly design the parking lot and building foundations. Look for a notice in your mail box as to the date and time of the next Community Center development meeting. Plans for the new center are on display at the Marktown Community Center.



visit us on line at www.marktown.org

Since its Inception in 1917 the Marktown Histori

Tiny little Marktown, our town, the place we live and raise our families, believe it or not is featured in literally dozens of books that have been published over the decades. While we are mentioned in nearly all of the various histories of Lake County, more notably we are also featured in a good many other publications. We thought we would share some of that information with you in this issue of Marktown Update.

As we noted in our last issue, we were featured in the nationally syndicated **Ripley's Believe it or Not** illustrations in October, 1967. In November 1969 that illustration was included in **Ripley's Believe it or Not! 15th Series**.

We were also featured on the cover of a university text titled **Social Problems; A Critical Approach** by Kenneth J. Beubeck which was published in 1979. While there is no mention of Marktown, the photo is obviously our park with children at play.

In the past years our neighborhood has been featured in a number of tourist based books designed to promote travel. **Around the Shores of Lake Michigan: a Guide to Historic Sites** by Margaret Beattie Bogue was first published in 1985. This is an outstanding publication which may still be in print and it includes a photography of School Street along with a brief description of Marktown. Next on the list of tourist books is **Oddball Indiana: A Guide to some Really Strange Places**, 2002. This is by far one of the least complementary items about our neighborhood. When you read through the book you will find that the author was not very complementary about virtually anything in Indiana. It is probable that he lives in Ohio or Illinois. A more complementary view, is printed in **Indiana: Off the Beaten Path** by Phyllis Thomas. It is now in its sixth edition and is readily available. While it lists a contact phone number for tours, the text is unfortunately misleading in

relation to the size of our community and we hope to have corrections made before the seventh edition is released.

Next on the list of publications is the **Lake County Interim Report: Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory** published in May 1996. I know that the East Chicago Public Library has a copy because we donated a one to them for inclusion in the East Chicago Room. This is a federally mandated survey of all of the potentially historic properties in Lake County. Similar reports have been done for each of the other counties in Indiana.

The city of East Chicago has also gotten into the publishing business. Back in 1988. Archibald McKinlay, IV wrote **Twin City: A pictorial History of East Chicago, Indiana**. While the book has been out of print for many years, it is still available. It features a very rare photo of Park Street and some rather complementary text about Marktown.



Marktown has also been included in a number of museum projects over the years. The most recent of which was **Frank Lloyd Wright and Colleagues: Indiana Works**. The exhibition was sponsored by the John G. Blank Center

in Michigan City in 1999. This was a major exhibit and included all of the Indiana work of Marktown's architect Howard Van Doren Shaw. The catalogue for the exhibit included a 1920 photo of Marktown and a brief section on Howard Shaw and the Mark Town Site.

In the late 1980's a group of nationally prominent photographers worked together on a major exhibit titled **Changing Chicago: A Photodocumentary**. The exhibit was very well received and a catalogue was published by the University of Chicago Press in 1989.

David Plowden, one of the nation's leading industrial photographers published a series

Marktown District has been Featured in Dozens of Books!

of his photos in 1985 under the title of ***Industrial Landscapes***. When Mr. Plowden was in East Chicago doing work on this project, Paul Myers was his safety escort at LTV Steel. When the exhibit first opened and the book was released we were very pleased to see that not only LTV was included, but so was Marktown.

Most recently Jamilo Jose Vergara and Timothy J. Samuelson worked together on a publication titled ***Unexpected Chicagoland*** which was released in 2001. This is a wonderful book which includes a number of properties here in northwest Indiana and southern Michigan, not to mention Chicago.

Arcadia Press has been publishing a series of pictorial histories of various cities and towns for a number of years. One such book is ***Lake Forest: Estates, People & Culture*** which was released in 2000. Dr. Arthur Miller and Shireley M. Paddock authored this unique perspective on the elite north shore community of Lake Forest. Clayton Mark, the founder of Mark Manufacturing Co. and the Mark Town Site had a home in Lake Forest designed by Mr. Shaw in 1913. And yes, the Marktown Historic District is featured in the history of Lake Forest, Illinois.

The last two books that we will talk about are probably two of the most important. The first is ***The Architecture of Howard Van Doren Shaw*** by Virginia Greene. It was published by the Chicago Review Press in 1998 and is still available. This is a relatively accurate text that tells the story of Mr. Shaw and shows a number of his more important commissions. It features a section on Marktown which includes photographs of the community before it was completed. The author decided to use only original photographs so the properties shown are in the condition when they were completed, or in the case of Marktown, the year before they were completed.

The book provides insight into the remarkable architectural designs of Howard Shaw.

The last book that we will mention is also the most recently published. ***99 Historic Homes of Indiana: A Look Inside*** by Marsh Davis and Bill Shaw was released on October 1, 2002 in Indianapolis. It is published by Indiana University Press and is readily available at bookstores. This is a classic "coffee table" book with some of the most fantastic photographs of homes in Indiana that you would ever want to see. Included in the book are some outstanding examples of homes and private residences in the entire state of Indiana. Included are the Governor's Mansion in Indianapolis along with homes designed

by Frank Lloyd Wright and virtually every major architect that ever worked in Indiana. The book does not tell the story of the architect or even of the architecture of the home. It details the lives of the people who have restored these remarkable properties.

Lake County has but two inclusions in this book. Paul Yurkas's Italianate home built in 1855 and one home in Marktown, which as we know was built in 1917. The Governor's Mansion in Indianapolis is actually on

the next page after the Marktown property. If you would like to see the inclusion on Marktown, it should be posted on our web page in the near future.

So, the next time that you are at the East Chicago Public Library or at your favorite bookstore, check out the books that include YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD. Marktown is probably better known to those that don't live here than by those that do. We are working on fixing that problem with each issue of Marktown Update. There are two privately printed archives on the Marktown Historic District. They are featured in an article on the next page of UPDATE. ☞



A note from a reader in Arizona...

Dear Paul,

When I got up this morning I wished I could go to Marktown today. Thank you for sending us the bulletins.

We enclosed a check for the 2003 Marktown Calendar, hope there is some left. We would love to have one. Thanks for everything.
The Brownlee's

Marktown Website Provides Info to Thousands Around the World

While the Marktown Historic District web site has only been up and running since January of this year, we are pleased to announce that in the very first month we received over 1,000 visitors to the site. That's 1,000 new visitors and does not include those who returned to the site more than once. The web page is being expanded on a monthly basis and each month, at least one new section is being added.

Did you know that there are more than 180 separate sites that feature the search word of Marktown? In all of this, there is only one site that deals specifically with the Marktown Historic District. You can go to virtually any search engine on the internet and type in "Marktown." When it is done with the search, just look for "Marktown Historic District" and click on it. You can also go directly to the web site at:
www.marktown.org

Speak Spanish and Need City Assistance - Not a Problem in East Chicago

The point was brought up recently that not all of the municipal offices in East Chicago have someone on staff that speaks Spanish. We thought we would set the record straight on this one. EVERY municipal department in East Chicago has someone on their staff who speaks Spanish and can translate to English, bar none! If you call and that person is not available at that particular time, the call will be transferred to someone who can field the questions and resolve your problems and concerns. This has been the case for several years. All of the various departments in East Chicago are bilingual.

Marktown Archives Available to All

There are two outstanding archives about Marktown and the residents of our neighborhood that are available to all. *They are:*

Marktown In Print

This 400+ page book was first printed and released in July of 1993 to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Marktown Historic District. It was released in cooperation of with the East Chicago Centennial Committee and contains newspaper articles, redevelopment plans and much, much more in relation to the history of this most unique community. All of the material is presented in chronological order and is fully indexed. This is by far the most comprehensive collection in relation to Marktown available at this time. (hard cover) *Price: \$60.00 (plus shipping if it has to be mailed)*

Marktown on the Party Line

For more than 30 years lifelong resident Jessie Stewart wrote articles about the residents of Marktown for the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company newsletter titled The Bulletin. A close friend of Miss Stewart was Mrs. Bruner, who over the years collected and saved many of the various articles in reference to the resident of Marktown. This collection was preserved in two scrapbooks which were in turn passed down to Jim Bruner. Both scrap books have been reproduced in 8 1/2" X 11" format and are professionally hand bound for your convenience. 270 pages. (hard cover) *Price: \$60.00 (plus shipping if it has to be mailed)*

These two outstanding archives are made available by the ***Marktown Preservation Society***, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the restoration and preservation of the Marktown Historic District. The ***MPS*** is also the organization which sponsors the ***Committee for a Better Cleaner and Safer Marktown Historic District***.

If you would like to obtain a copy either of the two books or need additional information on the Marktown Preservation Society or Marktown, please call Paul Myers at (219) 397-2239.